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Network Review

JOURNAL OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK

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NETWORK CALENDAR 2016-17

September 24	Albert Schweitzer Institute day conference in Cambridge – see website.
September 30	Continental Meeting in Rome – <i>Convergent Evolution, Attractors and Love</i> – see website. Programme now complete.
November 19	<i>Conscious Ageing and the Wisdom of Elders</i> A day conference with Colet House with Diana Clift, Anne Geraghty, Dr Peter Fenwick, Dr Tim Read and contributions from participants – leaflet enclosed.
April 7-9 2017	Mystics and Scientists 40th Anniversary conference (Dr Fritjof Capra, Prof Ravi Ravindra, Dr Jude Currivan, Prof Marilyn Monk, Dr Merlin Sheldrake. See details on website.
October 14-15 2017	Beyond the Brain in London.

LOCAL GROUPS

LONDON - CLAUDIA NIELSEN – 0207 431 1177 OR EMAIL CLAUDIA@CNIELSEN.EU

We meet at 38 Denning Rd NW3 1SU at 7.30 for an 8pm start when parking restrictions are lifted. Nearest tube station is Hampstead (Northern Line) or Hampstead Heath (Overground). Cost is £10 for members and £12 for guests. Please confirm attendance so I can anticipate numbers. Friends and non-members are always welcome.

For more comprehensive information on presentations (to include synopsis and biographies) plus summaries of past ones, go to the *London Group* page of the SMN site at www.scimednet.org.

Please note that sometimes talks have to be rescheduled and information is sent via email so even if you are not in London but would like to be kept informed of changes, please send me an email and I will put your address on the circulation list.

OCTOBER

Monday 10th **Charles Jencks** - *In Pursuit of Greater Meaning*

NOVEMBER

Monday 14th **Geoff Crocker** - *Atheist Spirituality*

2017 JANUARY

Monday 16th **Dr. Rupert Sheldrake** – *Title to be advised*

FEBRUARY

Monday 13th **Dr Peter Moore** - *Science, Religion and the Future of the Afterlife*

OTHER GROUPS

(SEE UPDATES IN EMAIL NEWSLETTER)

THE FRENCHMAN'S COVE EXPERIENCE

is unlike any other. It is a unique setting for a remarkable combination of conference and recreation in an unspoilt area near

Port Antonio Jamaica

17th-22nd January 2017

Suggested travel from London 16th - 25th January

Professor Bernard Carr will present

THE COSMIC CONCIIOUSNESS CONNECTION

The event will be chaired by [David Lorimer](#) and hosted by [Diana Clift](#)

Further details from [Diana Clift](mailto:di@dianaclift.com) - di@dianaclift.com

Notice to Contributors

All proposed contributions should be sent to the Editor by email as a Word and/or PDF file.

For further guidelines please email: dl@scimednet.org

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Editor: David Lorimer
4 Place Joseph
Lakanal, Les Baillards,
09600 Montbel,
France

E-mail: dl@scimednet.org

Web Site: www.scimednet.org

(Members may apply to the SMN Office for password to access the Members Only area of the web site).

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Scientific and Medical Network
Registered office:
151 Talgarth Road,
London W14 9DA

Tel: 0203 468 2034.

Email: info@scimednet.org

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Walking down another street

Dr Paul Filmore, Chairman
chairman@scimednet.org

You may be familiar with the poem (and book) by Portia Nelson (Nelson 2016), 'There's a Hole in My Sidewalk'. It starts:

1. *"I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the
sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find
a way out."*

You may agree with the parallel that this is true for organisations and society, even though it is written for personal journeys. The second verse is still about being 'lost':

2. *"I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the
sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same
place.
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes me a long time to
get out."*

Continuing the parallel, the third verse is about people and organisations who have started to reflect, by looking honestly at what is around them. Perhaps this is the point at which people start visiting our website or even risk coming to one of our meetings. This is where our local groups have a vital part to play, and where the groups need to reflect the best of our Network values, specifically as we say 'we provide a safe forum for the critical and open minded discussion of ideas...' and are 'sensitive to a plurality of viewpoints'. At our main meetings, we need to look out for and fully support people who are dipping their toe in the water for the first time.

3. *"I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the
sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in. It's a habit."*

*My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault. I get out
immediately."*

The fourth verse is, I believe, where the majority of our loyal members are. This requires an active participation in life, watching out for the pitfalls, misdirections and even untruths that surround us, while actively exploring new thinking and participating in dialogue. I believe this is supported by our meetings, our online resources (e.g., recordings of past talks), and our new online discussion forums.

4. *"I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole
in the sidewalk.
I walk around it."*

Of course the final verse is the clincher! But how many of us actually do this? I do though believe this is what the SMN stands for. Our new draft vision, reported in the May 2016 editorial, clearly articulates this and concludes with: 'We invite you to join us in co-creating new paradigms to bring truth, beauty, health and well-being into harmony, and so help heal our fractured culture'.

5. *"I walk down another street."*

I would encourage everyone to participate in some small part in helping deliver our vision, in order to help change organisations and society. Whether you forward an article on our Facebook page to a friend or attend a local group meeting, you help! And also we would appreciate it if you would update your profile on our web site. (Your profile can be found under your name, via the drop down menu, when you are logged in.) This allows us all to communicate and be involved in searching and building together.



On a different note...

It was my honour to make two presentations at our Annual meeting in July. We thanked Martin Redfern for many years' service as a director and vice chair, and wished him great joy with his new wife Kirsten, in their new home. Martin will continue to have an active part in the Network, recording our meetings and supporting wherever he can. The second presentation was to Chiara, our Office Manager, to celebrate her recent marriage. We send our best wishes to Chiara and husband Alekos.

To comment on this editorial, please visit our web site, and when logged in, click on 'Forums' under 'Network', and find the 'Editorial' group.

Reference:

Nelson, P (2016) There's a hole in My Sidewalk, <http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/536859-there-s-a-hole-in-my-sidewalk-the-romance-of-self-discovery>, 1/9/16.

*“The highest reward for man's toil
is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it.”*

John Ruskin – 1819-1900, Art Critic and Philanthropist



Dream, Levitation, and Life after Death

Searching for Connections

Michael Grosso

*Michael Grosso has been active in consciousness research since the 1970s – I first met him in New York in 1984 when he was focusing on the wider implications of NDEs as explained in his brilliant book *The Final Choice*. Even then he was interested in the parapsychology of religion and his most recent book is on *St Joseph of Copertino*, also reviewed in this issue. Here he looks at some wider connections between dreams, life after death and levitation.*

A theory should simplify and connect disparate phenomena – like an apple falling from a tree and a planet revolving around the sun – as Newton did with the hypothesis of gravity. In this brief essay, I want to talk about levitation and life after death in light of the familiar but mysterious world of dreams. The dream is my gravity that connects the disparate. The afterlife and levitation may seem like strange bedfellows, but I will try to connect them via the dreaming mind.

My discussion will stick to phenomenology. Questions of brain function, neuroscience, and physics are outside the scope of these few remarks. I also lay aside questions about dream interpretation. My concern here is with the phenomenon of the dream itself: so-called REM sleep, dream states in their dream space, which is distinct from physical space. This bare fact is my starting-point.

Most of us take our dream life for granted, but Gordon Globus, psychiatrist and philosopher, writes: “Our most creative moments are while dreaming. Even seemingly unimaginative people may experience rich dream lives. There are infinite worlds possible within our dreaming bubble of perception. Dreaming frees us from the actual world to the set of all possible worlds.”¹ Mark Twain, in his biographical *My Platonic Sweetheart*,² says something similar when he says that the dreamer within the most ordinary person is a marvelous creative artist.

I want to show how two apparently very different things, the phenomenon of levitation and the reported evidence for life after death, may be grounded in the common experience of dreaming. I’ve asked whether it makes sense to talk of exploring the “next” world now,³ and recently published a book on psychokinesis, in particular, levitation.⁴ Levitation, a grossly physical anomaly, turns out to be causally linked to extreme states of mind like ecstasy and possession. I wondered about the two controversial ideas, levitation and survival, how they might be related, and if the link was dream reality.

A dream world

It is possible to think of life after death as entering a prolonged dream world, as explained by the philosopher, H.H. Price, in 1953. But now my big leap. I want also to suggest that levitation may be the result of dream space temporarily breaking into waking 3D space, which could explain some of the odd effects eyewitnesses observed in St. Joseph and D.D. Home when they were entranced.

We can begin with dreams and death. Is death a kind of migration to a world of dreams? Price wrote “The Idea of ‘Another World’”⁵ to solve a philosophical problem. We generally have no idea of what a “next” world might be like. There’s no credible conception at hand. Evidence for life after death – some of it impressive – needs a theory of the ‘next’ world to make it intelligible. Without some coherent picture in mind, talk of an ‘afterlife’ is just words. How can it be said that we “live” after our bodies die?

Price’s view is that when we die, or rather when our bodies die, we – our conscious selves – stick around in the form of mental images. These are made of our memories, feelings, and desires. They are shaped by our wills, imagination, and all manner of unconscious forces. Awakening from our former brain-filtered consciousness to a new but roughly similar mind-filtered consciousness, our sense of self, no doubt a bit disoriented, will survive. No longer occupying bodies, the old space and time constraints melt away; our image-constituted existence assumes a mental, dreamlike cast.

Price notes that his idea didn’t originate with himself, citing Whately Carington and C. J. Ducasse as predecessors as well as ideas from Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism. In death we shed our bodies and find ourselves existing in a world of mental images. “And a whole world composed of such families of images would make a perfectly good world,” Price observes.

What kind of life can we imagine apart from our present biological substrate? A life of consciousness, he says. The afterlife will be a life of what we are conscious of and it will unfold the way a dream unfolds by means of a purely mental logic. If there is another world, it will be continuous with our present consciousness, though probably intensified and surrealistically transfigured. Extrapolating from dreams known from personal experience, we can form an idea of worlds made of dream images. Bodily death then will consist of an altered state, marked by an end of sensory life and clock time. All that remains from our previous life will be our mental knapsack, our imaginal history and basic mental functions. Price argues that this afterworld need not be solipsistic. With telepathy and telepathic apparitions we should be able to communicate with others and find or create social (or anti-social) groups with realistic, convincing settings. According to Price, if we survive, there will be many afterworlds, each the collective creation of like-minded discarnates.

One might ask: *where* are these worlds? I would reply by asking, where do our nightly dreams occur? Clearly, the dream world is not in physical space. It is in its own space, with its own laws, geometry, and mindscapes. Ditto for all the postmortem spaces. Suppose I dream I'm rowing a boat in the Central Park lake; I hear the splash of oars, orient myself to the tree-lined shore straight ahead and the quaint bridge to my left. I am in a space, but not physical space. The dream space would be nowhere 'near' the physically real space by the lake in Central Park.

We ought not to suppose that the afterworlds we fashion from our memories and desires will be unalloyed bliss. In the absence of restraining physical stimuli, the full range of our inhibited mental life may vent itself. Involuntary upsurges of repressed psychic matter could make the afterlife trip difficult and unpleasant, especially if punishing guilt or rebounding hatred come into play.

Price's main point: after-death survival is intelligible, a referent with structure, but a world radically mind-dependent and dreamlike. We seem to have stipulated a possible gateway to the 'next' world. Our dreaming minds are an experiential link to what we shall gain full access to only after the complete shedding of our bodies.

Let's take this a little further. Price's model for an afterworld may also serve as a model for the spiritual worlds people know from comparative studies of religion and anthropology. Beyond the rare ghostly visitation, we're all in principle open to insights, information, inspiration, experiences that might result from contact with Price's 'next' world, which is by definition a world of the creative imagination.

Experience and tradition show that through dreams, trance, and mystical ecstasy, individuals, by rite, practice, or intuitive leaps, may gain power, knowledge and spiritual insight. The dream then isn't just a way to make sense of the idea of another world; it also provides a way to explore what may await us in the 'next' world.

There are historical accounts of methods for cracking open the secrets of the 'other' world. The healing shrines of the ancient world were centers for dream incubation where one prepared to meet the divine healer, Aesclepius, in a dream.⁶ All focusing meditation techniques approximate sleep in the reduction of sensory intake, in effect, retreating to dreamlike conditions. Psychotherapist Adam Crabtree sees the focusing of consciousness as the key to trance-induction and evolutionary advance.⁷ Dream researcher Robert Van de Castle has written about using lucid dreaming for therapeutic purposes. The lucid or conscious dreamer may learn to confront, interrogate and dialogue with dream figures one encounters.

Related to all this is the idea of dream communities. Psychiatrist Montague Ullman was a pioneer in this area. Members of a group share their dreams and together draw out the insights of value to different members.⁸ Finally, research indicates that the dream is one of the most common vehicles of paranormal experience.⁹ Dreaming is a state that lends itself to creative inspiration and paranormal cognition.¹⁰ Again, the dream is the mental dimension of our selves; but also a vehicle for traveling in that dimension.

Minds and brains

I want to interject a comment on how minds relate to brains. The standard view is that the brain produces and in effect is identical to everything we call mental or conscious. Unfortunately, nobody knows how this actually works, or whether it is even intelligible. I think there is a better model, more compatible with human experience.

The model is as old as Plato and the Upanishads and has a varied history in science, philosophy and religion.¹¹ According to this view, consciousness is a primal fact of nature; not produced by the brain, it uses the brain to ensure biological survival and replication. The full range of our potential consciousness is no doubt vast, but due to biological and cultural constraints, is systematically distracted and constricted.

And yet, in spite of the mass crushing and manipulation of global consciousness, a yearning for more is evident and the voices of people moved by ideals can be heard. And there are stories, the infinite human story. Stories of extreme, perilous situations that bring about life-changing events, often that look like rescues from a mysterious, benign and transcendent source.¹² A nurse recounted to me how driving her car, she stopped for a red light. When the light turned green she was about to hit the gas pedal but was stopped by the appearance of her dead mother in front of the car. She jammed on the brake and a Mack truck ran the red light. The appearance of her mother caused her to hesitate and avoid crashing into a speeding truck. Either the spirit of her mother saved her life or her subliminal mind saw disaster coming and dreamed the right life-saving apparition – a brilliant, unexpected performance!

There is a whole spectrum of experiences that appear as transient openings to Price's postmortem dream-universe. People have sought by prayer, by meditation, and by ritual to engage this hypothetical world of mental images – of saints, daemons, fairies, angels, geniuses, gods, goddesses, and so on. Shamanism, yoga, magic and mysticism are traditions of experimental approach to a place congruent with Price's dream-world space. The classic near-death experience could be described as a portal to this mental, dream-suffused dimension of being, and I think it can be shown that ancient mystery cults like that of Mithra, Eleusis, and Dionysos were methods of exploring the extraordinary mental spaces visited by near-death experiencers.

Price's model makes intelligible the 'next' world'. I extend that model to encompass our whole mental world, a kind of big dream we all participate in, unconsciously present, and superposed on our 'normal' space-time world. By extending our concept of mind beyond the limits of our personal mind-bodies, we make room for a large array of empirical data, paranormal and mystical,

otherwise excluded from our reality map. Where the facts warrant it, we should extend our conception of the boundaries of mental life, and Price's solidly empirical dream-model provides a credible starting-point.

Levitation

To carry this yet further, I want now to suggest that the dream idea of another world might help us make sense of the wonderfully bizarre phenomenon of levitation. I became interested in a famous case of reported levitation, which led me to write a book on the subject.¹³ On a trip to Italy I obtained Domenico Bernini's 1722 biography of Joseph of Copertino. I also read Eric Dingwall's erudite essay on Joseph in *Human Oddities*. Bernini's biography stood out because it was full of eyewitness testimony to the friar's aerial phenomena; by luck I acquired a copy of it in Italy.

Levitation intrigued me because I had interesting flying dreams. It seemed a symbol of free spirit and I confess I

found the image of the flying friar *funny*. But most important, were the reports of supernatural flight true, it would be a whopping counter-example to an assumption held with ironclad conviction by most well-educated people. If levitation is for real, there must be something fundamental that we don't know about physics, about biology, and about the human mind.

So suppose that levitation is a fact of nature.¹⁴ How would that connect with our idea of a 'next' world, a world made of dream space? Consider a composite image of Joseph posing (as it were) in full ecstatic form: he's floating or soaring through the air, the brothers pinch, poke, pluck and jab the friar's body but he feels nothing; mentally, he's somewhere else. If you touch his garment you may pick up a fragrance of unknown provenance on your sleeve, not to be washed out for years; his body and garments are incombustible, hovering in the air over arrays of huge burning candles; the wind on him as he flies has no effect on his garments, all the folds remaining in place like a piece of sculpture; and indeed Joseph's aerial capers have all the earmarks of an exhibition, a super-rational display of the 'impossible'. Now all that I've described is of course unthinkable in everyday life. There is, however, a place where these 'impossible' things are experienced but don't excite too much wonder or perplexity. This place where the 'impossible' is taken in stride is in our dreams. All sorts of impossible things happen in our dreams.

So, if we accept the evidence, Joseph in ecstasy does things in the waking world that we can do only in our dreams. Normally, the two realms exist apart; we carry on either in the waking world or in the dreaming world.¹⁵ Now the key to what may happen in Joseph's presumed anomalous flights I borrow from Bernard Carr, a cosmologist interested in theories of higher space. Carr describes a physical situation where two different dimensions of space are compacted into one dimension, but without loss of information in either. The idea of compacting dimensions of space intrigued me as a painter. It's the sort of move that the Cubists and the Futurists, not to mention the Surrealists, often made in their work.

There might also be a metaphysical application. One could see, and perhaps explain, Joseph's levitations as resulting from the creation of a bubble of compacted dream and 3D space. According to this view, Joseph levitating in sight of witnesses during Mass, is enclosed in a finite bubble of waking-dream space, contiguous with his moving body. The scene has all the apparent properties of objects in physical space; however, seamlessly co-present are effects associated with dream space – i.e. the ability to fly, and all the rest. As far as I can see from the reports, the region of compacted space is transmitted to the extent of Joseph's body, including what touches or is touched by his body.

This is shown in stories of him carrying other living creatures into the air with him. He grabbed the hair of a disturbed man brought by his family to Joseph for treatment. Joseph lifted the man up into the air with him, as he did with a sheep he embraced and a huge wooden cross that he seized. In the new compacted condition, normal reality may shift with dream-mediated alterations of time and space. Einstein proved that the space-time fabric is not absolute but subject to variations of mass and acceleration. Around Joseph, the physics of space and time also seemed to change, but the cause seems to have been ultra-Einsteinian – something, in short, unknown. So is there a physics of dream space?

Extra dimensions

Bernard Carr, in a statement of his views, titled "Hyperspatial Models of Matter and Mind", writes that central to the new paradigm he is proposing "is the invocation of extra dimensions beyond the familiar ones of space and time."¹⁶ Joseph aloft and dancing in the air to the beat of the shepherd's horn and drum seems like an impossible marriage of dream and reality. Carr argues for a five-dimensional map of the reality

we inhabit. The extra dimension can be none other than the dimension of mind, mind, however, with oneiric resonance.

Individuals standing at a distance from the levitating friar are in normal 3D space, observing a scene whose centre is a monk smitten by rapturous desire to unite with the Madonna. What causes these compactions of dream and waking space? Normally we wake, sleep and dream in cycles. A linear procedure, one state follows the other. The only disruptive variable I can pick out as causative is the ecstatic state that seems always to precede the levitation.

So the conjecture here is that somehow the ecstatic state causes the compaction of waking and dream space. Ecstasy entails the displacement of the normal personality, creating the void that allows dream and waking spaces to blend into one surreal space. The anomalies are now free to manifest. According to this view, levitation – perhaps the whole spectrum of what we call psychophysical anomalies – are harbingers, projections, or perhaps incursions from the ‘next’ world, the wider dimension of creative mind that underlies our evolving personalities.

So, to round this off: starting with a review of H.H. Price’s theory of the dream as model for the ‘next’ world, we took two further steps: the first was to suggest that the afterworld dream model serve as model of our subliminal mental world. In fact, matters of historical fact suggest ways in which

humans have learned to engage this other world and its presumptive greater mind. The history of religion might be thought of as the record of humans trying to converse with this dream-formed ‘idea of another world’.

We don’t know the full range of possible dialogue with the mind of Price’s “other world”. Of course, traditional societies have a head-start in this matter and have evolved their myths, rites, and practices for engaging it. Of course, there’s the problem of disenchantment in our techno-physicalist culture: skeptics who dig themselves into graves of meaninglessness and militant atheists locked into their one-dimensional worldviews. What has one to offer those who have lost all sense of the sacred, the poetic, and the authentically mysterious? The notion of a greater or transpersonal mind we can learn to dialogue with – stripped of all dogmatic encrustations – offers a minimalist model of transcendence for people of that description.

My second move was to say that the idea of dream space may shed light on dramatic anomalies like levitation. We already have a clue: our own flying dreams. I think I know what it feels like to levitate from my flying dreams. Waking consciousness is a great mystery, the so-called “hard problem”. But when you consider *dream* consciousness, the problem seems harder but even more interesting. In dreaming consciousness, we see what looks like the stuff of infinite creativity, like an image of eternity’s sunrise.

Michael Grosso is an independent scholar and artist, studied classics and got his doctorate in philosophy from Columbia University. He has taught philosophy and the humanities at City University of New York, Marymount Manhattan College, Kennedy University, and City University of New Jersey. Current interests include consciousness studies and extreme psychophysical phenomena. Books include *The Final Choice*, *Frontiers of the Soul*, *Soulmaking: Uncommon Paths to Self-Understanding*, *The Millennium Myth: Irreducible Mind* (co-author; ed. Ed Kelly); *Beyond Physicalism* (co-author, ed. Ed Kelly; most recent: *The Man Who Could Fly: St. Joseph of Copertino and the Mystery of Levitation*. Grosso is on the Board of Directors of the American Philosophical Practitioner’s Association (APPA). His blog is [www:// consciousnessunbound.blogspot.com](http://www.consciousnessunbound.blogspot.com) and may occasionally be found on Facebook.

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- 5 Price, H.H. (1995) The Idea of ‘Another World’. In *Philosophical Interactions With Parapsychology*, pp.237-262. H.H. Price. Edited by Frank B. Dilley.
- 6 Meier, C.A. (1967) *Ancient Incubation and Modern Psychotherapy*. Northwestern University Press.
- 7 Adam Crabtree, *Memoir of a Trance Therapist*
- 8 Montague Ullman, ed. (1988) *The Variety of Dream Experience: Expanding Our Ways of Working With Dreams*. New York: Continuum.
- 9 For the connection between dreams and extrasensory perception, see Van de Castle, *Our Dreaming Mind*, Chapter 14. See also Louisa Rhine, ‘Psychological Processes in ESP Experiences.’ *Journal of Parapsychology*, 1962, 26.88-111;172-99. According to Rhine, dreams were the most common vehicle of reported paranormal experience in the cases she collected.
- 10 See *Irreducible Mind*
- 11 See chapters 3 &4 in *Beyond Physicalism*, 2015, Eds. Kelly, Crabtree, Marshall’ Rowman&Littlefield.
- 12 Geiger, J. (2009) *The Third Man Factor: Surviving the Impossible*. New York: Weinstein Books.
- 13 Grosso, M. (2016) *The Man Who Could Fly*
- 14 The case for the reality of Joseph’s levitations is made in chs. 2&3 of *The Man Who Could Fly*.
- 15 See especially Mavromatis, A. (2010) *Hypnagogia: The Unique State of Consciousness Between Wakefulness and Sleep*. London: Thyrsus Press.
- 16 *Beyond Physicalism*, p. 230.

Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness

Stephan A. Schwartz, Gary E. Schwartz, PhD, Larry Dossey, MD

*This Declaration, as you will see below, follows up the Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science, which we reprinted in Network Review 115, Summer 2014, pp. 4-6. A volume based on this will be published early next year, with 18 contributors and entitled **Expanding Science: Visions of a Post-Materialist Paradigm**.*

Introduction

In February 2014, a group of internationally known scientists from a variety of scientific fields (biology, neuroscience, psychology, medicine, psychiatry) participated in a summit on post-materialist science. Co-organized by Gary E. Schwartz, PhD and Mario Beauregard, PhD, of the University of Arizona, and Lisa Miller, PhD, of Columbia University, the summit was held at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Arizona. The purpose was to discuss the impact of the prevailing mechanistic-materialist ideology within science and the emergence of a post-materialist paradigm for science, spirituality, and society. The resulting Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science was published in *Explore* [2014; 10 (5): 272-274] and on the Open Sciences website, which also resulted from the summit (<http://opensciences.org/about/manifesto-for-a-post-materialist-science>).

In September 2015, a second meeting was held in Tucson, called The Final Transition Conference. Organized by consciousness researcher Stephan A. Schwartz, the purpose of the meeting was to explore the questions: What happens when we die, and what constitutes humane, decent care of the dying? The conference faculty was composed of therapists, clinicians, scholars, and researchers from the US, Europe, and Asia all of whom are involved in some way in the processes of human death. Many of those who attended felt that an exclusively materialist model of consciousness — the view that consciousness is produced entirely by the brain and that physical death annihilates it — cannot account for the rich and variegated experiences they see in the dying who are the focus of their research and healing service.

Their views were nuanced but on the existence of a nonlocal aspect of consciousness they agreed, and there emerged from the faculty of the Final Transition Conference the *Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness*. It was first drafted by Stephan A. Schwartz and Gary E. Schwartz (no familial relationship), who invited Larry Dossey to become the third drafter. They then submitted it to the faculty. This Declaration represents a consensus view of the undersigned faculty of The Final Transition Conference and others.

This Declaration is an application and extension of the 2014 Manifesto for a Post-Material Science to the greatest issues anyone faces: the origin, destiny, and nature of human consciousness, and how these considerations affect the care of humans at the end of life.

Anyone interested in joining us, and affixing their name to the Declaration, please contact Stephan Schwartz at: saschwartz@earthlink.net

Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness

1. Twenty-first-century medicine and healthcare pride themselves on being evidence-based. Whether the therapies are conventional, complementary, or integrative, in all instances the explicit philosophy guiding their use is their grounding in the best available scientific theories and outcome research. This same philosophy ostensibly guides end-of-life care.

2. And yet, the nature of consciousness has been largely explored only from the assumption that it is a poorly understood neurophysiological process entirely resident in the human organism. Its inherent physicality has become an ironbound axiom. However, a growing body of experimental and clinical research now challenges this assumption. The conference faculty was composed of therapists, clinicians, scholars, and researchers from the US, Europe, and Asia all of whom are involved in some way in the processes of human death. Many of those who attended felt that an exclusively materialist model of consciousness — the view that consciousness is produced entirely by the brain and that physical death annihilates it — cannot account for the rich and variegated experiences they see in the dying who are the focus of their research and healing service. Although the consensus of the authors and co-signers of this Declaration is that the collective evidence points toward this conclusion, other consciousness scientists believe that the current evidence is not definitive enough to conclude this with certainty.

3. Today, there are seven stabilized experimental protocols used in laboratories around the world, each of which requires the existence of nonlocal consciousness to be successful. All seven protocols have independently produced six-sigma results, meaning that the odds against a chance explanation of the experimental finding are roughly a billion to one, or above a 99.999999 percentile of certainty.

4. In addition, there are now five areas of consciousness science that are directly linked to the processes of death that also support the existence of a nonlocal, non-physiologically dependent consciousness. This research includes (1) near-death experiences (NDEs); (2) after-death communications (ADC); (3) death-bed vision and physical phenomena at the time of death; (4) laboratory studies with research mediums; and (5) reincarnation research, particularly involving young children.

5. We believe that the question, can consciousness exist that is not physiologically based? has been answered in the affirmative, and that it is time to move on — time to incorporate these findings into clinical applications and public policy, and integrate them into evidence-based, end-of-life care.

6. We believe that everyone involved in end-of-life care — patients, providers, loved ones, administrators, insurers, policy makers — should be educated in a non-sectarian, evidence-based manner concerning these findings, and how they can be integrated in the care of individuals at the end of physical life.

7. Programs should be developed that prepare patients and their loved ones for the journey following death, based on the evidence provided in 4. This can have major effects in reducing the fear of death in both patients and their loved ones.

8. The current practice of keeping severely ill patients alive, against all odds of meaningful recovery as judged by medical experts, needs to be rethought in light of this research. Important factors in this decision also include a patient's Living Will, the quality of his or her final days, and the desires and wishes of loved ones when a patient is no longer conscious or responsive.

9. The new consciousness research points to the existence of an individual's immortal, nonlocal consciousness, a perspective affirmed by many philosophical and religious traditions for millennia. If consciousness pre-exists physical birth, and continues after corporeal death in a cycle whose dimensions we do not yet know, then liberty, respect, and justice require that an individual have autonomy over when to terminate their corporeal existence. We believe this process is best served when every aspect of end-of-life palliative care representing the integration of sciences and humanities is available to that individual.

10. We emphasize that all of the above considerations have substantial economic implications for family members, health care providers, insurance companies, and societies.

11. We see nonlocal consciousness as existing within the broader context of the emergence of a new paradigm Science, one which incorporates consciousness. We recognize, however, that acknowledging non-physiologically based consciousness has the potential to evoke emotional responses that challenge deeply held beliefs in both mainstream science and religions. It will take a commitment of courage, compassion, and integrity to address the wealth of implications and opportunities afforded by integrating the research findings supporting a consciousness inclusive model with end-of-life care — more accurately, end-of-*physical*-life care. Now is the time to advance this integration.

Stephan A. Schwartz

Columnist, Explore
Author, *The 8 Laws of Change*

Gary E. Schwartz, PhD

Professor, University of Arizona
Author, *The Afterlife Experiments*

Larry Dossey, MD

Executive Editor, Explore
Author, *One Mind*

Co-signers listed in alphabetical order

Loyd Auerbach, MS

President, Forever Family Foundation
Adjunct Professor, JFK University
Adjunct Professor, Atlantic University

Eben Alexander III MD

Neurosurgeon
Author of *Proof of Heaven* and *The Map of Heaven*

Callum E. Cooper, CPsychol. FHEA

Psychology Division
University of Northampton

Barbara Dossey, PhD, RN, FAAN

Co-Director, International Nurse Coach Association
International Co-Director,
Nightingale Initiative for Global Health

Peter Fenwick, MB BChir FRCPsych

Neuropsychiatrist Emeritus Institute of Psychiatry,
Maudsley Hospital
Author, *The Art of Dying*

Neal Grossman, PhD

Associate Prof Emeritus of Philosophy
University of Illinois at Chicago

John Klimo, PhD

Professor, Argosy University
Co-author of: *Handbook to the Afterlife*

Stanley Krippner, PhD

Professor of Psychology and Integrative Inquiry,
Saybrook University
Co-editor of: *Varieties of Anomalous Experience*

Louis E. LaGrand, Ph.D.

Director of Loss Education Associates
Author of *Healing Grief, Finding Peace* and *Love Lives On*

Elizabeth E. McAdams, Ph.D.

President, International Foundation for Survival Research

Jeffrey Mishlove, PhD

Author of: *The Roots of Consciousness*

Vernon M. Neppe MD, PhD

Fellow Royal Society (SAf)

OHKADO, Masayuki, PhD

Professor, Graduate School of Global Humanics, Faculty of
General Education, Chubu University

Diane Hennacy Powell, MD

Psychiatrist
Author of: *The ESP Enigma*

Linda G Russek, Ph.D.

Heart Science Inc.

Marilyn Schlitz, MA, PhD

President Emeritus, Institute of Noetic Sciences
Author, *Death Makes Life Possible* (book and film)

Mel Schwartz

Psychotherapist
Author of *A Shift of Mind: A Quantum Approach to Life Mastery* (Spring 2017)

Charles Tart, PhD

Professor of Psychology Emeritus
University of California – Davis
Author of: *The End of Materialism*

Patrizio E. Tressoldi Ph.D.

Dipartimento di Psicologia Generale
Università di Padova

Pim Van Lommel, MD

Cardiologist
Author, *Consciousness Beyond Life*



Coming Home

Zelda Hall

In this essay Zelda discusses how we become alienated from our true home; disconnected from our bodies and from nature, and how this disconnection results in misguided attempts to control. How can we take responsibility for all aspects of our lives and evolve from the need to dominate to having a sense of the sacredness of all creation including ourselves?

*I'm truly sorry Man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle,
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!*

(Burns, 1786)



Robbie Burns the Scottish poet, who was also a farmer, wrote this in the 18th century to a field mouse whose domicile he had destroyed when ploughing. It comes from the same poem as the well-known line: 'The best laid schemes o' mice an' men Gang aft a-gley'. Burns had great feeling for all living creatures, as for this tiny mouse.

Dominion or domination-the best laid schemes

Burns apologises for the way in which the 'dominion' of humanity has disrupted the unity of nature. It would appear that some things never change! Are we humans really destined to relentlessly consume and destroy the Greater Being of which we are a part? Or are we capable of having 'dominion' expressed as guardianship and care, in which we come home to ourselves as we truly are: part of the sacred whole, surrendering our need to dominate, to control and debase? This drive to subjugate and colonise is present on so many levels. 'Dominator culture' is a term coined by futurist and writer, Riane Eisler (1987). As Terence McKenna (1992) points out, "The entire structure of the dominator culture ... is based upon 'our alienation from nature, from ourselves and from each other.'" Carolyn Merchant in her essay *The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature* refers to how "...nature cast in the female gender, when stripped of activity and rendered passive, could be dominated by science, technology, and capitalist production." (Merchant, 2006). Clearly, this alienation would appear to have become a universal and disturbing phenomenon.

Eaten out of house and home

A few days ago I read about a young woman, who, while still a teenager, had fallen ill and, at 56 stone, had to be cut out of her house and lifted in a hoist to the ambulance. It cost an estimated £100,000 for emergency workers who spent eight hours cutting her free and removing two walls of her home in the process (Henley, 2012). I can only imagine the deep feelings of powerlessness and humiliation this young woman must have felt. It seems that she had not left the house for months. Food had been delivered in the form of large quantities of kebabs and chocolate. As with Burns' field mouse, her abode and her body, the housing of her spirit, were very damaged.

How could it get this far? Why this endless stuffing, this filling up beyond necessity, beyond pleasure? Could it be that this is symptomatic of the deep hunger that is experienced when we feel cut off, unloved, disconnected from our deepest being - which then leads us to an endless drive to consume, egged on by a culture in which the growth of the economy is our greatest priority. The statistics for obesity show that it is spiralling out of control, to epidemic proportions. In the UK alone, obesity levels have more than trebled in the last 30 years and, by current estimates, more than half the population could be obese by 2050 (Choices, 2014). Yet as Paul Maiteny points out:

"We know that obesity, heart disease, chronic fatigue, depression, cancer and other health problems are often symptomatic of lifestyles and associated desires and priorities. The same is true of our ecological malaise. But beliefs and feelings have a far tighter hold over behaviour than mere knowledge of facts. We are so strongly attached to our ways of living, and our *convictions* that they are good for us, that we avoid acting on what we *know* - that we are the causes of our own disease. What we prefer to see as the 'problems' are actually ways of unconsciously avoiding these deeper causes within ourselves. These are the real problem, but this is just too excruciating to admit." (Maiteny, 2009 p.1).

This denial then leads to yet more addiction, more 'stuffing'. Our ways of dealing with these 'problems', become attempts at control. Vast amounts of money are poured into research to develop medicines and 'treatments' to combat the results of our failure to deal with the underlying causes.

The alienation from ourselves, to which McKenna refers, is reflected in our attitudes to our own bodies. With an overdeveloped sense of ego we become as separated from our body as we are from nature. We look down at our bodies from our heads. And as Steve Taylor (2005) describes in *The Fall*, how humans fell from the position of grace of knowing ourselves as part of a greater whole: "They were the thinking ego inside their heads.....the body - and all its processes and instincts as 'other' to them."

I see this often in my practice when I ask "How does that feel in your body?" The eyes go upward, looking for an answer outside, anywhere than actually in her body. So the young woman mentioned above became a prisoner in, and an enemy of, her own body.

Birds and bees... and pills

Another indication of our further distancing from nature and from our own bodies can be found in the consequences of the widespread use of 'The Pill' as a method of contraception. It is currently used by more than 100 million women worldwide. When it was first introduced in the 1960s, 'The Pill' seemed to offer more self determination for women and a very welcome liberation from the constant fear of an unplanned pregnancy. I well remember obtaining the pill in my early twenties from a renegade doctor in Dublin, in defiance of the law at the time. "Oh," he said, "we can't have you getting up the spout." And I was grateful to him. However the pill constitutes a form of control of women's bodies in such a way that we escape the pull of the moon, the ebb and flow of the tides. Our bodies are 'fooled' into false pregnancy. Our bleeding is no longer 'real' and does not function as a cleansing (Owen, 1993). And when a twenty-eight day pill was developed, this semblance of a cycle was removed altogether. As the advertisements tell us, this 'frees us' even more to play tennis, wear white shorts, and swim every day of the month, if we so please.

Now however it seems that this widespread use of synthetic hormones and the suppression of our biology, for sometimes up to twenty years, have had a more widespread effect than we could have imagined. Ironically, while the pill didn't create the field of infertility medicine, it has turned it into an enormous industry. Inadvertently and indirectly, infertility has, for various reasons, become the pill's primary side effect. In addition, the excretion of the hormones into the sewage system is shown to play a role in causing endocrine disruption, which affects sexual development and reproduction in wild fish populations. In an attempt to reassure pill users that this all really isn't so bad, in a report on contraception (Moore, McGuire, Gordon, & Woodruff, 2011) we are told that:

"The good news is this: contrary to what has been stated or implied by media reports and anti-contraception advocates, *synthetic estrogen from birth control pills is not the sole or primary source of endocrine-disrupting chemicals in water.*"

AND

"... the volume of veterinary estrogens given to livestock each year in the US is **five times** (my emphasis) the volume of EE2 consumed by women who use hormonal birth control methods. "

I find this far from reassuring.

In fact, from the beginning, the development in the US of the pill was not about women's rights, it was about population control. When it was developed, America was consuming more than 50 percent of the world's resources (with 6 percent of the world's population), "The Pill symbolized the redemption of science, showing it capable of developing a technology to stabilize a world order that it simultaneously threatened to destroy." (Tone, 2001). This kind of dream of using technology to save ourselves from the destruction that we have caused, extends to the fantasy of being able to escape to another planet when we have exhausted this one ("PlanetQuest - The Search for Another Earth," n.d.).

Up all night

The dominator culture is reflected too in the increased use of Sildenafil or, as it is commonly known, Viagra. This was originally developed to treat erectile dysfunction in men. And it is widely prescribed for diabetics. However, since it was discovered that people using anti-depressants often experienced 'sexual dysfunction', Sildenafil was prescribed for men in this situation too. Next, researchers discovered that it also 'improved sexual functioning' in women so it was prescribed for them as well. One pill counteracting the effect of another pill. Now Viagra is widely used as a recreational drug, so that men can get an erection at the drop of a hat, so to speak, overriding any other clues their bodies might be giving them as to their physical or emotional health. Connecting with someone sexually becomes like an off /on switch unrelated to real intimacy or feelings of safety. This then compounds alienation from the other, to which McKenna refers above. Of course we could discuss how much of Western medicine is based on this very same paradigm, of the body as a machine that must do our bidding. However I will restrict myself to this particular aspect for now. It is in essence similar to wanting to be able to consume any food from any part of the world at any time of the year. There is no appreciation for the fact that our bodies too have seasons and cycles. This applies not only to women, but includes men.

Seed and sacrament

One can see a parallel to this in the drive of such companies as Monsanto to get control over another kind of reproductive capacity - seeds and their distribution. This company also formerly manufactured controversial products such as the insecticide DDT, PCBs, Agent Orange, and recombinant bovine somatotropin (a.k.a. bovine growth hormone) which is the kind of endocrine-disrupting hormone mentioned above that is found in our water. Monsanto now has patents of all kinds of seeds and is lobbying aggressively to obtain the rights to plant them. This would make us even more dependent on just a few big international companies for our food supplies. In *Spiritual Ecology* (Vaughan-Lee, 2013), Sister Miriam MacGillis, who runs Genesis farm, in the earth-centred tradition of Thomas Berry, speaks of 'the sacramental aspect of seeds, this primary revelation of the sacred in seeds.' She goes so far as to call the whole technology of genetically engineering life a 'desecration' and evil. We are attempting to control life at the very, very deepest level.

Coming to our senses

"We have become more cerebral, and retreated more and more from the senses - especially from smell, touch and taste - as if repelled by the body; and sight, the coolest of the senses, and the one most capable of detachment, has come to dominate all." (McGilchrist, 2010 p. 621).

I am a therapist, and part of my training is in body-oriented therapy. In the past, much of my work has been with women, helping them to appreciate the uniqueness of their own bodies and to experience their body as the wondrous creation that it is. Part of this work involves finding ways to protect themselves against the deleterious effects of continual assault with airbrushed depictions of womanhood and messages about how they 'should' look. I am not rigid in my opposition to cosmetic surgery, however in its increasing availability it adds to the illusion of the achievement of a state of visual 'perfection'. Surgery, diets, pills - they all hark back to the need to control and shape nature. While in the seventies there were discussions in the women's movement about the freedom of hairy legs or furry armpits, in the current millennium young women are considering breast enlargement, Botox or vaginoplasty. The drive to 'perfect' has reached into our most intimate regions.

Men, whose 'value' has always been judged more in terms of economic status or the size of their cars, are also now coming increasingly under pressure to conform to a certain physical norm. These days I have many more men coming to my practice.

Letting go of control

This is a story of one of those men. Details have been changed to protect his identity. Richard grew up as an asthmatic child in a family incapable of expressing affection, a father who never held his son. His way of getting acceptance was to be a high achiever - in sport, in school and later, in work. Inside, he was lonely from an early age. But he had developed a tough exterior, to the extent that his colleagues even wondered if he had some kind of autistic tendencies. Then, after a period of increased stress, the dam broke, the loneliness poured out and the tough facade crumbled. It was classified as 'burnout'. That was a term that was acceptable in the highflying corporate environment in which he worked. He was terrified of losing status. First there was a panicked striving to restore the former edifice. It failed. His soul would no longer countenance yet another betrayal of the part of him that longed for a deeper and more meaningful connection to life. He was overcome with waves of grief and after initial resistance, gradually began to accept that he had felt isolated for most of his life. He had suffered from stomach problems for quite some time. Instead of competitive sport, he started doing yoga and meditation. With so much free time on his hands he started spending more time in nature. His wife had always been a keen gardener and now he got involved too. Slowly but surely, and somewhat to his surprise, he found himself losing interest in his former 'corporate' self. I felt very touched when, in tears, he described how, for the first time in his life, he felt 'golden rays of light penetrate the grey' with which he had always felt surrounded.

Coming home

Solastalgia, a term coined by Glenn Albrecht, who describes himself as an environmental philosopher, is:

"... the pain or sickness caused by the loss or lack of solace and the sense of desolation connected to the present state of one's home and territory. It is the 'lived experience' of negative environmental change. It is the homesickness you have when you are still at home. It is that feeling you have when your sense of place is under attack." (Albrecht, 2012)

At some deep level, like Burns' field mouse, the young woman in the story above must have felt this. As did Richard. If we connect to the deep rhythms, the ebb and flow of our feelings and sensations, if we sink deeply into our body, we can feel how we have been estranged. If we can allow ourselves to feel the grief and the loss we can, finally, return home. In sensing and honouring the sacredness of our own flesh we can extend our senses out beyond our skin to feel the air, the scents, the all-permeating vibration of the sacred web of which we are a part. Simultaneously with the joy of the realisation of our deep connection with all living beings and the earth herself, we sense the suffering not only of all other human beings, but of all creation. We are then, truly alive. We can slowly release the need to control, and the drive to dominate fades. We become a participant in the wonder of nature.

By taking responsibility for what our body needs and the longings of our soul and extending this awareness outwards to other creatures and to the earth, perhaps then we may come close to achieving the feeling described by Jung:

"At times I feel as if I am spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the splashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the procession of the seasons. There is nothing...with which I am not linked." (Jung, 1983 p. 252)

We can begin to heal the deeply wounded relationship with the earth. We can come home.

Zelda Hall M.A. M.Sc. is a psychologist and therapist with more than 30 years experience in working with groups and individuals. Having obtained an M.A. in Psychology and Philosophy (then referred to as Mental and Moral Science) at Trinity College Dublin, Zelda went on to train in different modalities such as Body Oriented Therapy and Breathwork in the Netherlands. During a health crisis in the early 90s she was guided by a dream to work with Arnold Mindell (founder of Process Oriented Psychology-POP) and colleagues. She studied Process Work for ten years and was chairperson of the Association of Process Oriented Psychology in the Netherlands for seven years. Her approach combines elements of all aspects of her training and knowledge developed throughout the years. Recently Zelda completed an M.Sc. in Consciousness, Spirituality and Transpersonal Psychology (validated by Middlesex University) with the Alef Trust in cooperation with the Scientific and Medical Network. Her research thesis was on the subject of childhood dreams and their significance for psychospiritual development and physical health.

Two chapters on dreaming by Zelda are included in the recently published book: *Transpersonal Ecosophy, Vol. 1: Theory, Methods and Clinical Assessments: Volume 1* (Schroll, 2016)

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Regenerative Design and a Science of Qualities

Dr. Daniel Christian Wahl

Here Daniel builds on the theme of the previous article and shows how health is an emergent property of complex dynamic systems – sustainability is not enough. We need systemic regeneration. His book is also reviewed in this issue.

Your body, your family, your community, the team you work with, as well as, cities, economies and ecosystems, can all be understood as complex dynamic systems. Generally speaking, all systems with more than three interacting variables are complex dynamic systems and better described by non-linear mathematics and circular rather than linear causality.

Understanding the dynamics of change within complex dynamic systems has critical implications for our understanding of health. Conceiving of health as an emergent property of complex systems can inform salutogenic - health-generating - design. This approach is needed to move beyond sustainability by creating diverse regenerative cultures that are elegantly adapted to the bio-cultural uniqueness of place.

All complex dynamic systems are fundamentally unpredictable and uncontrollable. In 2001, at Schumacher College I had the good fortune to be mentored in my understanding of complexity theory by Prof. Brian Goodwin, co-founder of the Santa Fe Institute of Complexity and one of the most influential theoretical biologists of the 20th Century.

With Brian's help, I understood why we need a fundamental reorientation of scientific enterprise - away from striving to predict, control and manipulate (a science of quantities) and towards the anticipation of ambiguity, humility in the face of uncertainty, and the aim for appropriate participation. To respond appropriately to the mess we are in, we need to learn how to facilitate the emergence of whole systems health. To do this effectively we need a science of qualities (Goodwin, 1999) and also an economics of qualities (Capra & Henderson, 2013).

A crisis of perception, authentic wholeness and appropriate participation

Faced with multiple converging crises - all of them rooted in what Gregory Bateson and Fritjof Capra first called a crisis of perception - humanity is challenged to redesign the human presence on Earth. We need to transform our current degenerative and exploitative impact into a regenerative impact on communities, ecosystems, regional economies and the biosphere as a living and constantly transforming whole.

The presence of health can best be conceived of as a scale-linking emerging property of complexity. From this perspective, health is seen as the 'pattern that connects' (Bateson, 1972) individual, family, community, ecosystems and planetary wellbeing into 'an authentic rather than a counterfeit whole' (Bortoft, 1996 & 1971). Ultimately healthy individuals need healthy communities and ecosystems, and their health - in turn - depends on and creates a healthy biosphere and the ecosystems functions that provide the basis of our planetary life-support system.

Additive (counterfeit) wholes are built up from their parts - in a mechanistic way. We tend to think of them as objects (parts) out there, separated from all the other parts. By contrast, an emergent (authentic) whole *comes into being in relationships through the act of participation* (process).

In authentic wholes - like individuals, ecosystems, and the biosphere - emergent properties such as health and sustainability depend on the sum-total of all participations (processes) within the interconnected holarchy (Koestler, 1989). The participating agents are not objective parts outside of the whole, rather they are subjective participants in the 'co-dependent arising' of self and world (part and whole).

In authentic wholes neither the parts nor the whole are primary. They bring forth each other. Every "thing" or every action - *and inaction* - becomes an intervention that changes everything. In this dynamic way of seeing, we all participate in co-creating the future, either consciously or unconsciously.

There is no observer independent reality out there to be described objectively and hence - at best - science is an inter-subjective consensus making activity. Once we become consciously aware of our own agency in complex systems we become co-designers of our common future.

To design for whole systems health is the only appropriate response to understanding our participatory agency and with it our responsibility for the world we bring forth together.



Large-scale ecosystems regeneration on the Loess Plateau, Hou Jia Gou, Shaanxi, China (Before 1995, After 2009)
Reproduced with permission of John D. Liu & The Environmental Media Project

Through scale-inking regenerative design we can restore health and wellbeing to individuals, communities, ecosystems and the planetary system. We can actively regenerate the living body of Earth!

Does this sound overly complex or too intellectual? Bear with me! Humanity's future depends on a more widespread understanding of the difference between real and counterfeit wholes. In order to respond appropriately to the complex and interconnected challenges we are facing - as one species - we urgently need to understand the nature of participatory wholeness. This will inform how we can facilitate the emergence of healthy wholes within wholes.

An authentic whole is precisely not *the* whole - not an object that can be pointed at - but a subjective presence that emerges out of the act of participation and distinction of self and world (being and environment). In *The Tree of Knowledge*, Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela (1987) described this act of 'distinction' as the cognitive process of "structural coupling" that simultaneously brings forth self and world - organism and environment.

Gregory Bateson was the first to point out that the unit of survival is not the individual or the species, but the individual, the species *and* their environment (in Macy, 1994). "It is far more appropriate to view organisms as members of an indifferentiable whole that has never dissolved into discrete entities" (Holdrege, 2000).

If we want to learn how to participate appropriately in what A.N. Whitehead called "life's ongoing exploration of novelty", we need to understand that life is a fundamentally interconnected whole - a process of 'interbeing' that we have conceptually separated into organisms and species. The human micro-biome project has demonstrated that we carry more non-human than human cells within us and on us. We are a walking symbiotic ecosystem within symbiotic ecosystems!

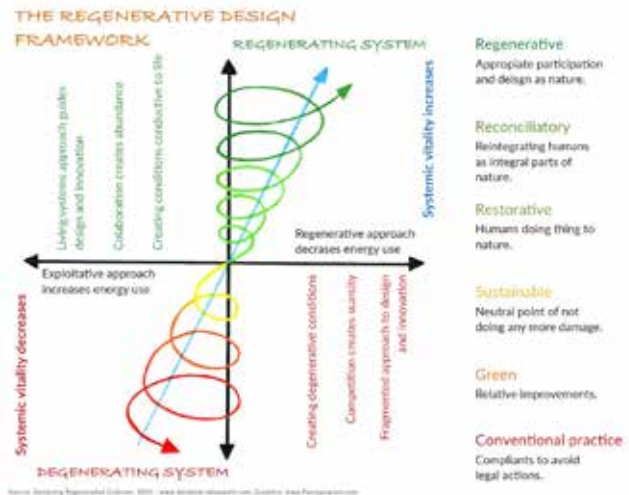
Sustainability is not enough, we need regenerative design for systemic health

Depending on where we start the count, humanity has a long track record of degenerative impacts on the planetary life support system. If we start the history of destruction with the advent of anthropogenic deforestation, extractive farming and erosive tilling of the soil, the story begins some 8,000 to 5,000 years ago. If we begin the count with the advent of mining and quarrying, our history of destruction goes back some 3,500 to 2,000 years. With the advent of the industrial revolution - only 250 years ago - we can observe a step-change in degenerative practices that have caused an anthropogenic mass-extinction and brought us to the brink of apocalypse.

Some people still believe that creating a sustainable human presence on Earth is the domain of a few do-good-ers and idealists. Yet, the bio-physical reality of *now* is that we have only a few years left to avoid that our grandchildren will have to act as the hospice workers of a dying humanity on a severely impoverished planet with a radically different climate regime.

Only a transformative response to climate change, resource depletion, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and unsustainable inequality will herald the beginning of what Thomas Berry called the Ecozoic. Simply being sustainable is no longer enough! We have done so much damage already that the primary focus of human industry from here on out has to be effective regeneration of ecosystems and planetary health.

Bill Reed (2006) offered a framework for shifting our mental model which describes the continuum of shifting from 'business as usual' - falling just short of breaking environmental laws and regulations, to green - the self-congratulatory practice of doing a little less damage than the rest, to sustainable - what William McDonough called "a hundred percent less bad, and



The Regenerative Design Framework, adapted with permission of Bill Reed and reproduced from *Designing Regenerative Culture*, by Wahl 2016; Illustrator: Flavia Gargiulo, 2016

on to restorative practices - still in the mind-set of man as the manipulator of natural systems.

Only once we reintegrate humanity into the community of life and overcome the false dualism of nature and culture, will we be able to co-create truly regenerative practices. Regeneration is a necessity if we hope to co-create a healthier and more vibrant planet on which all of humanity and all of life can thrive, not just survive.

Design for Interbeing: salutogenesis and the importance of scale-linking design

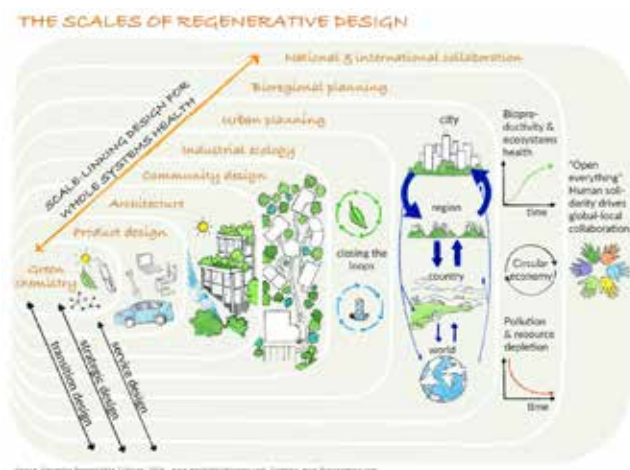
To respond to the current emergencies we need a framework for the practice of salutogenic or health generating design. This can be provided through a science of qualities and a better understanding the participatory nature of our 'interbeing'. We need to become conscious of our agency in holarchically structured complex dynamic systems within systems.

As these systems are inherently dynamic, evolving and changing they need to simultaneously be thought of as processes within process with critically interdependent emergent properties: the health of individuals, the health of communities, ecosystems, bioregions and ultimately biospheric or planetary health (see Wahl, 2006).

Yet we need more than just a framework, we need a re-design of the story we tell about who we are and the way we assign meaning to our lives and to life as a whole. We have to follow the root causes of the current crises up-stream, all the way to the crises of perception that have led us to believe we are separate from each other and destined to fight against one another and against other species for survival in the face of scarcity, rather than thrive as *one* humanity appropriately participating as "mere members in the community of life" (Leopold, 1949).

We are capable of co-creating abundance for all of humanity and the whole community of life, yet we need a new story for humanity - a story where we are no longer 'masters of nature' but regard ourselves as humble apprentices of nature. We have to learn biomimicry's central lesson: "Life creates conditions conducive to life" (Benyus, 1997).

To do this successfully we have to reintegrate our own biological being into the wider living process that contains us. We need to connect to our innate biophilia (Wilson, 1986) and create what Andreas Weber has called a "new enlivenment" (2013). Our wellbeing as living embodied biological beings depends on the wellbeing of our larger ecological self - the living body of Earth.



The Scales of Regenerative Design, reproduced from *Designing Regenerative Culture*, by Wahl 2016; Illustrator: Flavia Gargiulo, 2016

Charles Eisenstein framed this shift in our guiding narrative as the transition from the 'story of separation' to the 'story of interbeing' (2013). This is a shift away from a mis-understood Darwinism rooted in the zero-sum game of Victorian economics and the degenerative systems it created.

It is a shift towards the creation of non-zero-sum cultures rooted in the understanding that in the mid- to long-term the success (health) of the individual depends on the success of the community of life and the health of the planetary systems as a whole. As we aim to create diverse regenerative cultures carefully adapted to the bio-cultural uniqueness of the bioregions they inhabit, we will have to pay attention to supporting salutogenesis at local, regional and global scale.

Integrative whole systems design for regeneration and systemic health links the scales of green chemistry and materials science, to product design, architecture, community design, urban and bioregional planning, industrial ecology and circular economies, all the way to networks of collaboration at the national and international scale.

The practice of health generating design at and across different scales will help us to design for positive emergence - aiming to regenerate the emergence of health without being able to predict or control the systems we participate in.

In doing so effectively at local, regional and global scale, regenerative enterprises and business ecologies are beginning to emerge that will leverage synergies and win-win-win solutions by creating collaborative advantage rather than competitive advantage.

In my recent book - entitled *Designing Regenerative Cultures* - I explore in some detail how we can switch from our current degenerative practices to regenerative ways of being in the world. Through more than 250 guiding questions I help the reader to investigate how he or she might participate in supporting the emergence of whole systems health.

Humanity's design brief has been clearly stated by Buckminster Fuller when he challenged us:

"To make the world work for 100% of humanity in the shortest possible time through spontaneous cooperation without ecological offense or the disadvantage of anyone." By applying a science of qualities through scale-linking regenerative design, we might just be able to do so in time.

Daniel Christian Wahl PhD originally trained as a zoologist and has been focusing on sustainability and sustainable communities since 1998. He was director of Findhorn College between 2007 and 2010, during which time he helped create the MSc in sustainable community design. He is a member of the International Futures Forum and a fellow of the RSA. During his MSc in Holistic Science from Schumacher College Daniel worked closely with Brian Goodwin and Stephan Harding. In 2006 he wrote his PhD in Natural Design under Seaton Baxter at the University of Dundee. Working part-time for Gaia Education, he has co-authored their UNESCO accredited online course in Design for Sustainability. Daniel free-lances internationally as a consultant and educator and also collaborates with the research working group of the Global Eco-village Network. Since 2011 he lives on Majorca. Daniel co-founded Biomimicry Iberia in 2012 and works part time on transformative innovation for the University for the Balearic Islands. His first book *'Designing Regenerative Cultures'* was published by Triarchy Press in 2016 (see review on page 55)

Contact:

Daniel Christian Wahl

e-mail: contact@danielchristianwahl.com

Website: www.danielchristianwahl.com

Twitter: @DrDCWahl

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Soil is the Stomach of the Plant

Patrick Holden

The health of the planet depends greatly on the health of the soil, which is an aspect of the necessary regeneration discussed by Daniel Wahl above – one of the most important influences here is Sir Albert Howard's Agricultural Testament, describing his work on maintaining soil health in India over a 30-year period.

I am a long-standing farmer and representative of the organic movement, but it is only recently that I have come to see just how much microbiology permeates every aspect of our lives. Although theoretically and mechanistically I knew this a long time ago, and was aware of the importance of soil biology and mycorrhizal fungi, it was only in 2012 that it really began to dawn on me how understanding the intimate, biological and symbiotic processes involved in my own digestion sheds light on the equivalent processes taking place in the soils of my farm.

In 2012 I heard a conference speech by Patricia Quinlisk, Head of Public Health in Iowa, about the remarkable recovery rate – up to 80% – of patients with digestive infections after they had received fecal microbiota transplants. Where antibiotics had been detrimental to their health, introducing healthy bacteria from stools had restored their colonic microflora.

It was through understanding that the human body is a biome – by definition, a large, naturally occurring community of flora occupying a major habitat – that I realised the full meaning of soil life and how interconnected it is to all other ecosystems. The dark mysterious world of soil biology is rarely brought to the daylight of people's understanding, even in the organic movement, due to the assumption that this is reserved for the in-depth investigations of soil scientists. The attention to soil during this International Year of Soils and the Berlin Global Soil Week 2015 will hopefully bring some of the fascinating discoveries of soil science to wider public awareness. However, if we understand this science only in terms of the earth beneath our feet, we miss out on seeing the awe-inspiring interconnectivity of soil with the rest of life.

Parallel digestive systems

The key concept that has changed my thinking on farming is to understand that the soil surrounding a plant's root zone is effectively its digestive system, or 'stomach'. Building on this parallel, my body breaks down the food I eat in an internal and, mainly, but not exclusively, anaerobic process that involves symbiotic communities of bacteria, which occupy the stomach, small intestine and large intestine. Nutrients are absorbed through the huge surface area of villi lining the gut, a process that is mirrored in the soil, although with plants the absorption is outside-in rather than inside-out. It is in this sense that the soil and its bacterial and fungal community can be seen as analogous to an external stomach of a plant, since these organisms, including a network of mycorrhizal fungi, play a central role in breaking down organic matter into absorbable nutrients, which are available to plants through their large surface area of root systems.

Although these processes in the body and in the soil function differently, there is a fundamental link – the digestive system. This system refines and transforms the material from one

organism, which occupies a low place in the food chain, to nourish another, further up the ladder. Through digestion, organic materials are broken down and transformed into new life forms: the soil biome nourishes the plant through complex digestive processes in the topsoil and rhizosphere, and the plant matter in turn becomes animal flesh as it is transformed through another biome, in this case an internalised gut. The health of all these interconnected organisms is, therefore, centrally dependent on the health of their digestive processes.

The secret world of microbes

At the microbiological level, there is something utterly compelling about the digestive process. This microscopic world opens up a new dimension of understanding in relation to the health connections between the life of the soil and the organisms that live inside our bodies. In the human gastrointestinal tract, approximately 1.5kg–2kg of non-human life forms, mostly beneficial bacteria and also other microorganisms, help with the process of digestion, enabling the subsequent absorption of short-chain fatty acids, while living off the energy produced by the fermentation of undigested carbohydrates.

As well as digestion, microbes perform various other vitally important roles in regulating the immune system and preventing colonisation by pathogens. The study of microorganisms, through research such as the Human Microbiome Project, has opened up new doors for understanding health. Similarly, the Earth Microbiome Project is systematically characterising the microbial diversity across the planet.

Even mainstream soil scientists are now beginning to present us with a new and clear message that microorganisms are crucial for soil health – even though we are only just coming to realise how important they are also for our own health. The layer of healthy topsoil, thriving with microorganisms, which covers much of the land's surface, is in effect a vast digestive system – the collective stomach of all plants, breaking down soil nutrients into bio-available forms that plants can absorb. The rhizosphere, or root ball, is the gut of the plant and the zone where plant roots and soil organisms interact in a whole variety of biotic, symbiotic and pathogenic relationships to enable these organisms to do their work. Plants secrete weak acids to dissolve minerals in the soil then draw these back up in solutions. They also secrete a portion of their photosynthetic energy through their roots as chemical exudates in the form of carbohydrates and proteins, which attract and stimulate the growth of bacteria and fungi.

Without the presence of microorganisms, the mechanics of the digestive system can still function to a certain degree. Purging our intestines of microorganisms through antibiotic use will not stop us from digesting food, just as bypassing the soil ecosystem through using chemical fertilisers or hydroponics will still stimulate plant growth. However, the long-term vitality and health of plants, animals and people is centrally

dependent on the presence and diversity of microorganisms, in the soil and gut respectively.

Soil microbial communities are considered the most biodiverse in the world and it is estimated that a single teaspoon of garden soil may contain thousands of species, a billion individuals and one hundred metres of fungal networks. However, only 1% of microbes that live in the rhizosphere have so far been identified by scientists due to difficulties in getting them to grow in the laboratory. "We know more about the stars in the sky than about the soil under our feet," says US microbiologist Elaine Ingham. Despite the lack of scientific knowledge of the specificities of soil microorganisms, the impacts of destroying soil biodiversity by failing to maintain sufficient organic matter, the overuse of chemicals and heavy tillage are obviously detrimental for soil health and fertility.

Microbiomes as the key to good health

The biodiversity of the organisms in our guts is also crucial for maintaining health. In the human microbiome, this is determined by the specific condition of each section of gastrointestinal tract. However, the compositions of microbial communities are different among people, because the ecological conditions of individual intestines are distinct depending on age, body condition, diet, lifestyle, geography and cultural traditions. Gut microbiomes are unique to each person – a kind of microbial fingerprint. Modern diets with high sugar content and processed foods, along with increased antibiotic use, have been shown to be detrimental to gut microbiota, which, conversely, can be improved through diets that feed the microorganisms that keep our guts healthy.

The realisation that when I eat I am not actually directly feeding myself but a diverse community of microorganisms upon which I depend for my health, has drastically changed my perception of how my interventions as a farmer can have a similar effect on the soils over which I have temporary stewardship. Every action, from crop rotation and feeding soil bacteria and fungi with composts or manures, to aeration and careful timing of grazing and cultivation, has the capacity to enhance or diminish soil life.

This new understanding has been mirrored in the scientific community. Until very recently, the mainstream understanding of food and agriculture has been through the lenses of reductionist chemistry and engineering, while biology has been largely sidelined or ignored. The popularised 'microbe revolution' and increased scientific research in microbiology has put the spotlight on linking an understanding of the human biome with the microbial life in soil.

However, as with all scientific advances, there are different ways of interpreting and using this knowledge for both the good and ill health of the planet. If we consider the 'nature as teacher route' when feeding the soil with compost, we literally feed it with living food that contains a whole range of bacteria and fungi. This starkly contrasts to the biotechnology route in which synthetically bred microbial solutions are being hailed as the manufactured probiotics of the plant world, which aim to increase chemical fertiliser uptake. Similarly, if we eat patented synthetically manufactured probiotics, we bypass the diversity and potency of eating living foods such as fermented foods. For example, it has been shown that one 16-ounce serving of sauerkraut is equal to eight bottles of high potency probiotics!

We need to be really open to all scientific and technological advances, yet remain extremely vigilant of the purposes they serve. There is huge potential for harnessing new knowledge in ways that can help us address the ecological crisis, yet there is also the danger of exploitation by vested interests, which view nature's capital as a resource to be exploited.

My personal soil challenge is to continue to explore how an understanding of soil, in all its extraordinary dimensions, can inform my future farming practices and deepen my relationship with soil in a way that increases its health. Every farming practice has an impact and every day, as a farmer, I have the possibility of deepening my knowledge, perhaps simply by walking on the earth and learning through my feet. Through doing so I am increasing my intuitive understanding of the consequences of my actions on the soil.

Patrick Holden, CBE is the Founding Director and Chief Executive of the Sustainable Food Trust. After studying biodynamic agriculture at Emerson College, he established a mixed community farm in Wales in 1973, producing at various times: wheat for flour production sold locally, carrots and milk from an 85 cow Ayrshire dairy herd, now made into a single farm cheddar style cheese.

He was the founding chairman of British Organic Farmers in 1982, before joining the Soil Association, where he worked for nearly 20 years and during which time the organisation led the development of organic standards and the market for organic foods. His advocacy for a major global transition to more sustainable food systems now entails international travel and regular broadcasts and talks at public events. He is Patron of the UK Biodynamic Association and was awarded the CBE for services to organic farming in 2005.





War is Hell - We must Stop It

Satish Kumar

We can enjoy Tolstoy's great story, but we should also heed his message.

Earlier this year I was watching the BBC adaptation of War and Peace, a visually inspired and heart-wrenching representation of Tolstoy's great narrative. It is a story of love and betrayal, joy and sorrow, extravagance and deprivation – but above all, it is an unambiguous articulation of the stupidity and futility of war.

During the war scenes, I found myself wondering whether Messrs Putin and Obama, Cameron and Hollande, Assad and Rouhani and all the presidents and prime ministers of the world were watching this programme. If not, then they should have been. If they were, then they would know the truth of truths: that war is hell and all wars end in unmitigated disaster.

After experiencing the carnage of the battlefield, Prince Andrei says to Pierre Bezukhov: "War is the vilest thing in the world. Men come together to kill each other, they slaughter and maim tens of thousands and then they say prayers of thanksgiving for having slaughtered so many people. How does God look down and listen to them?"

Even if people in politics, the military and business did watch the series, they may have focused on its photography, its costumes, its acting and its setting. But surely, hardly ever will they have watched the series – or, for that matter, read the novel – for its wisdom, its truth and its message.

Currently many wars are being fought in the Middle East. As a consequence, many countries, including European countries, are experiencing a deluge of refugees. Millions of people have been made destitute because of the egos of those promoting wars and their pride, narrow self-interest, geopolitical ambition and desire for power.

Of course, all warring parties claim to have high ideals on their side. They claim to be fighting for their religion, or for democracy, or for national security, or to stem the menace of terrorism. But religion, democracy and security are the greatest casualties of war. And, moreover, ordinary and innocent civilians – men, women and children – are terrorised in their homes, schools, shops, hospitals, mosques and churches. They are left with no other option but to flee from their homeland and seek shelter in other lands.

However, it seems that no government wants to have refugees coming to its country. Providing food, jobs, accommodation, education and medicine – let alone a sense of community – for millions of people in a short space of time is not easy.

Wars create refugees. If governments don't want to have refugees, they should not go to war. Whoever goes to war should be prepared to take the refugees, as many refugees as there are and will be. Waging a war and then barring refugees from entering your country is a dereliction of duty. Even when there is a civil war, countries not involved in the conflict have an

international humanitarian responsibility to support, sustain and accept people who are fleeing the war. But if countries are engaged in military action and causing the civilians to flee, such countries have an even greater obligation to accept refugees and support them until the war comes to an end and the refugees are able to return home. Nations involved in such wars also have an obligation to rebuild the destroyed homes, hospitals, schools, shops and cities, so that refugees can and are willing to go home.

Politicians need to ask themselves why they choose to go to war when there are no problems or disputes that cannot be resolved by diplomacy, negotiation, compromise, generosity and mutual understanding. The whole of humanity has a shared common interest to live in peace and harmony together despite our differences and diversities. Therefore, the wounds of all disputes, disagreements and divisions can and should be healed by rising above narrow self-interest and embracing the interest of common humanity. As Mahatma Gandhi said, there is no way to peace. Peace is the way.

The path of peace is paved by the principle of nonviolence. But governments need to recognise the falsity of claiming that their violence is good but the violence of others is bad. Nonviolence is a universal principle. We have to be prepared to minimise all forms of violence, and discard large-scale and organised violence. Politicians, like doctors, need to take the pledge of 'Do no harm' and follow the golden rule that we should treat others as we would like others to treat us. In the end it is the meek, not the military, who will be blessed and will inherit the Earth.

Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi set a shining example of such universal nonviolence. The Indian Emperor Ashoka – who was a cruel ruler and waged many merciless wars – came to the conclusion eventually that violence, slaughter of humans and destruction of towns and villages doesn't bring peace or happiness. Violence begets violence. If you want to establish peace, democracy, freedom and the practice of religious principles, that should be achieved through nonviolent means alone. Noble ends must be pursued by noble means. However long it takes, we have to have enough patience to restrain from violent response, be it domestic violence, class wars, civil wars or international wars. All wars are a failure of human ingenuity, negotiating skills, diplomacy and imagination.

In modern warfare it is impossible to avoid civilian casualties and collateral damage to schools, shops, hospitals and homes. Therefore, all wars are potentially illegal. The legally binding Geneva Convention says that non-combatant civilians must not be inflicted with death and destruction.

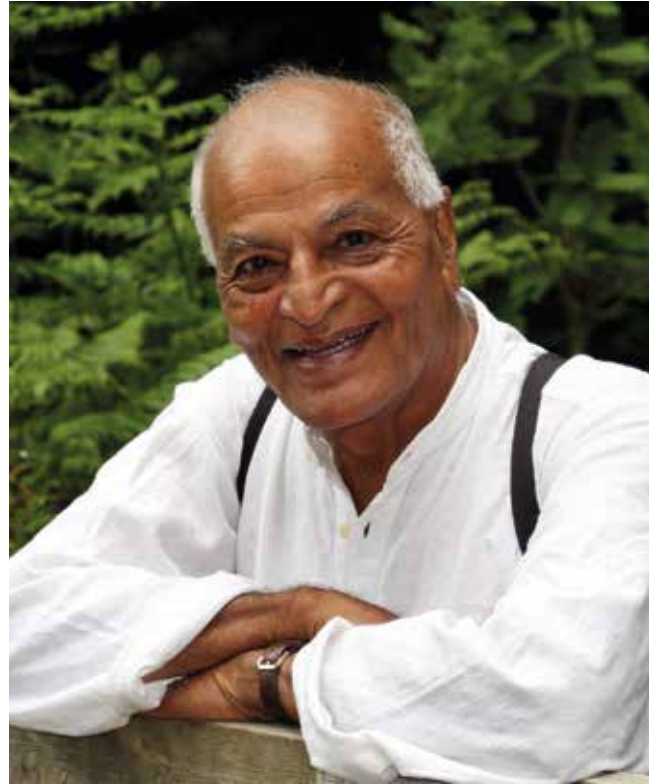
Martin Luther King wrote: "The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind."

We cannot extinguish a fire by putting more fuel on it. Jesus said it, the Buddha said it, the prophet Muhammad said it. Pope Francis says it. The Dalai Lama says it. Why are political and military leaders not paying any attention to this practical wisdom coming from a long line of enlightened human beings? Not only have we seen the enormous suffering of civilians and military personnel during small and great wars. We have evidence that wars don't work. You kill a dictator, and another tyrant appears and takes his place. You kill one terrorist, but then ten more are born and radicalised. The history of humanity is littered with failed wars and futile conflicts.

The time has come to realise that wars are barbaric and uncivilised. They are counter-productive. Let the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly pass a resolution to abolish wars and establish a strong world council of negotiators to resolve conflicts wherever they arise.

We need to be courageous and renounce war as a means to solve political problems. That is what Tolstoy says in War and Peace. It is not only a great novel but also a great message. And the BBC's adaptation is not only good acting, good photography and good performance: it is also a pertinent message to us all.

We can opt for war, or for peace. The choice is ours.



Satish Kumar is a former Jain monk and long-term peace and environment activist. He has been the Editor in Chief of *Resurgence & Ecologist* magazine for over 40 years and is the author of many books including *No Destination* and *You Are, Therefore I Am*.

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“Hate begets hate, violence engenders violence, hypocrisy is answered by hypocrisy, war generates war, and love creates love.

Unselfish love has enormous creative and therapeutic potentialities, far greater than most people think.

Love is a life-giving force, necessary for physical, mental and moral health”

Pitirim Sorokin, *The Ways and Power of Love*



Brexit: Psychological Cold Turkey Reframe

Maureen O'Hara, International Futures Forum (IFF)
(www.internationalfuturesforum.com)

This piece was first published on the IFF Blog and added an important psychological and cultural dimension to the discussion, linking it to other developments around the world. She argues that we are undergoing a fundamental crisis of identity and calls for a transformative response.

As a Brit who has lived in the US since the late 1960s I can't claim to have much of a handle on the political tides in the UK and even less on the slings and arrows of economic fortunes that swirl around the Brexit vote. But after four decades as a psychologist working with groups in cultures around the world, I do have a pretty good sense of human psychology.

In that light, watching the rise of Trumpism and open conflict between African Americans and police officials in the US, support on the rise for the far right in some European countries and now the Brexit vote, I have found myself increasingly troubled by what I see as fundamental failure of those in leadership positions to recognise, let alone understand, the scope of the crisis we are in.

In the UK, beyond the immediate political and governance shambles (largely created by the powerful themselves), elites and citizenry alike are ensnared in a larger and potentially far more consequential social disruption that has been gaining strength for decades. A cultural crisis is underway in all modern democratic societies where basic anchors of modern identity and social coherence are dissolving - perhaps irreversibly.

In the short run this turbulence is highly distressing and potentially dangerous. But on a longer view we could be experiencing what IFF members call a "cold turkey reframe", where shocks to existing conceptual frameworks are so acute as to challenge our taken for granted structures, creating space for new ideas, new institutions and new visions for the future of humanity. But I get ahead of myself.

On a personal level my working-class Yorkshire family has always been a pretty good barometer of the mood on the ground, especially in the North of England. Listening to their beefs, political loyalties, the choices they make and their aspirations for the future, I have come to understand their rising anxiety bordering on terror about a society that in significant ways has been changing around them faster than they can cope with or even make sense of.

I read the Brexit vote as a proxy for a whole spectrum of accumulating anxieties of indigenous Brits who were raised in a society that until very recently was remarkably stable and coherent. My own and my parents' post-war generations were encouraged to have national pride in "England", "Scotland", "Britain", expressed through our culture, art, song, story, food, mythology, pomp and circumstance and hymns we recognised after three or four bars. Social and personal identities were woven strand by strand from a myriad encounters within a British society that, whether realistic or overblown, knew who it was, what could be expected of it and what was acceptable. And for all but the very marginalized and mentally fragile that cultural stability translated into personal wellbeing.

No more

On the surface things might seem normal - cricket is still played on the green, Elizabeth still reigns, Scots still make the best whisky, Wimbledon is still the premier tennis venue - but the broader reality is that uncertainty and unpredictability have reached a crisis point. The Brexit vote has unnerved a generation who had opened up to the world and saw themselves as comfortably both British and European. When one listens to people talking about Brexit through the ears of empathy, beneath the anxiety the sense of loss is palpable.

Though much has been said about anger and even rage represented by both the Leave vote and the responses of the Remain camp after the vote, little has been said about the existential grief ordinary people were already feeling for a way of life that is dying around them through no fault of their own. Over the last 30 years or so the belief that the traditional British culture is no longer valued by leaders, business, academics or bureaucrats in Westminster and Brussels has become widely shared.

As one Brexit voter I saw interviewed remarked, "When you are taught all your life to be proud of your nation's vaunted history and its important place in the world - a founder of NATO and permanent member of the UN Security Council for instance - to be reduced to one identical star out of twelve on an anonymous blue flag really hurts." That he used the word "hurts" is revealing. He is speaking the language of feelings, not politics or economics. And the right response to feelings is empathy, not more argument.

Many feel they are very much on the losing side. They are losing good jobs, yes, but they are also losing their sense of place, of stable neighbourhoods and sovereignty.



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As Maslow reported, identity, meaning and coherence are basic necessities as important as shelter and food. In turbulent times we will do whatever is necessary to restore them, even if this comes with self-harm or a heavy dose of “othering” and demonizing those who have different histories and different views.

For many who have already been displaced or live close to survival's edge, a 10% drop in the standard of living because of Brexit is a bargain if it increases the sense of control over one's destiny. Cultural pride is also a factor at the other end of the economic scale. Comfortable Eurosceptics, people who are not likely to be much affected in the long run by an economic downturn in the UK, are already among the cosmopolitan elites, but they feel that the one thing global money can't buy - their hallowed British heritage - is being bureaucratised, standardised and purchased by the highest bidder. And in this they are not alone.

Psychotherapists and community workers know that when acute shocks occur more than one response is likely. Understandably some hunker down and try to keep things as they were, others may act out. But many - far more than we admit - are able to look the new circumstances squarely in the face and grow their way through them. They find colleagues, friends and settings where it is safe to talk about their emotional responses, where they can tell the truth, where empathy, non-judgmental acceptance and authenticity are the norm and where they can work through the existential tsunami. More often than not this process leads to new levels of consciousness, new appreciation of identity, and greater capacity to live with change than before.

A transformative response to the crisis would be to accept that established frames of late modern societies are no longer fit for purpose and no amount of top down processes or new management systems will work unless they release the resources available within today's diverse populations. We can look for the “positive deviants”, for “persons of tomorrow” - the people and organisations that are more than coping with the cultural crisis but who are actually thriving. Even in the midst of failing institutions,

innovative people who are secure enough within themselves to step out on to the edge and take a risk are inventing a future where local traditions can coexist with traditions in the process of being born.

Instead of returning to old refrains that don't work in the 21st century and trying to put Humpty Dumpty back together again, we must empathize with those who are losing their place, honour their grief, not argue, shame or ridicule them for what is a very human response to change and at the same time turn our face to the emerging future where both local and global psychologies provide the dynamism that can produce a humane and sustainable future for all, whether within the EU or not.

Contact Maureen at mohara@nu.edu

Dr. Maureen O'Hara is Professor of Psychology, National University, California and President, International Futures Forum-US. She is President Emerita of Saybrook University. She was first a bench biologist in her native Britain, but in 1970 moved into psychology to work with American humanistic psychologist Dr. Carl R. Rogers. She worked in Brazil from 1977 to 1986 training psychotherapists and was much influenced by her encounters with Paulo Freire. She collaborates with colleagues from multiple disciplines addressing the cascade of challenges faced by humanity in the 21st century. Combining her background as psychotherapist, development psychologist, organisational change practitioner and psychological futurist, she consults on the process of psychological adaptation to a radically changing world. She is Fellow of the www.worldacademy.org/ World Academy of Art and Science, and the American Psychological Association,. She is founding member of the www.internationalfuturesforum.com/home.php International Futures Forum in Scotland. Books include **Dancing at the Edge**, with Graham Leicester (2012); and **Handbook of Person-Centered Psychotherapy**, co-edited with M. Cooper, P.F. Schmid and A. C. Bohart, Palgrave-Macmillan (2013)





Global on-line Presence

Keith Beasley

To make a significant and lasting impression at this critical time in human history, it is vital that SMN is able to bring the vast and extensive expertise of its members to bear in the wider, internet community. With this in mind, we are pleased to report active and on-going discussions of a collaboration between SMN and the BodyMind Institute (BMI).

Founded by Lars Gustafsson and originally focussed on nutrition, BMI now provides state-of-the-art on-line training courses around the globe on a wide range of holistic health & well-being and personal/business development courses. SMN member Dr Keith Beasley is both a key part of the BMI team and a faculty member, teaching Reiki Healing, *Essence of Knowing* and a range of Accelerated Learning Lessons (ALLs), as described in his article in the Summer 2014 *Review* (pp19-21).

Your Courses On-line

A key benefit to SMN members is the opportunity to offer courses and training material through the BodyMind Institute web-site (www.bodymindinstitute.com). Offering course in this way has many advantages, including:

- **Format:** you can choose how long your course is. It does not have to fit a standard HE degree or other format. Current BMI courses are anything from a single video lesson of 30-45 minutes through to extensive, multi-part courses with hundreds of hours-worth of content.
- **Top-end learning environment:** BMI courses run on the EdX platform, as created by MIT and Harvard. Fully supported and with the latest features available, each tutor has full access to their material and to student progress.
- **Admin-free:** all student enrolment and access arrangements are handled by the automatic BMI systems and BMI support team.
- **Income stream:** prices to student vary accordingly to length of course, with the tutor typically receiving 30% of the course fee. This is increased (typically by an extra 25%), through the BMI referral scheme, for course sold by the tutor.
- **Evergreen:** Once prepared and live, the courses are available continually. Students work through them at their own pace and will have life-long access to course material. No need to worry about scheduling lectures, remembering semester dates, etc.

- **Automatic assessment:** Assessment of student performance, resulting in a Certificate of Completion, is up to each tutor. The learning platform contains a range of options for include quizzes and other assignments, usually requiring no tutor input: unless you want to.
- **Community engagement:** The EdX platform includes the option for discussions (for students with or without tutor) at any stage of the course, even for real-time, video meetings (e.g. seminar groups) using Google Hangout.

BMI is particularly looking for courses related to consciousness, health & well-being, behaviour change, New Science and the overlap between mysticism and science: based perhaps on material from 'Mystics & Scientists'. BMI work with tutors to generate course material that will work well on-line, for example by suggesting and encouraging exercises that help students to experience the material first-hand and to embody it. You will also be encouraged to participate in promoting the course, e.g. by providing material for the BMI Blog and Facebook pages, free e-books or short webinars, perhaps utilising existing SMN recordings of your lectures.

Affiliates

A key advantage to SMN itself is a BMI Referral Partner or Affiliate. With members' courses listed on the SMN website, SMN will receive a referral fee for any course bought through the site. With SMN tutors gaining a student and BMI getting an extended range of first-class tutors and courses, it is a win-win scenario.

Members, even those not offering courses, can sign up as affiliates and benefit in the same way. This could of benefit, for example, to anyone with a well-visited web-site or blog or who manages an extensive mailing list.

If you have a suggestion for an on-line course or would like to find out more about how BMI can support you as a SMN member, contact drkeithbeasley@bodymindinstitute.com.

*“Life is like riding a bicycle.
To keep your balance, you must keep moving.”*

Albert Einstein

A Possible Future Direction for the Network

From: Elizabeth Grigg, elizgrigg@yahoo.co.uk

I am generally an interested but non-active member of the Network, and am very concerned about the increasing collective mental ill health of our society, which seems mainly to be due to the lack of real purpose in life inherent in secularism.

This will only get worse if Brexit goes ahead and brings about the expected economic downturn, thus depriving people of their 'drug' of consumerism. Since Science is now 'God' and its leaders tell everyone that it is socially taboo to be religious, only Science can restore an acceptance of spirituality or religious faith. Although I accept that the Network is primarily an academic organization, it does also seem to me that this is where the necessary impulse must start in Britain.

In relation to the above, although research into the 'paranormal' is taking many fascinating directions, I have a concern, which may or may not be justified, about an apparent lack of consolidation of advances. Some areas, such as survival of consciousness after death and transfer of information by non-physical means, seem to be promising avenues. Could we help consolidate these advances, and then get the information out to the public? We do not need the approval of the reductionist materialists of the scientific establishment - the educated man in the street (or the media) is well able to tell the difference between a valid argument and one based on rigid dogma.

If we can just crack the barrier between the 'paranormal' and what is considered an acceptable view of the universe we shall have removed the main obstacle to acceptance of spirituality and faith.

However, if we are to introduce a tornado into society's concept of the universe we do also need to have a plan for how we are going to achieve this without causing chaos! Not everyone is going to be thrilled about the prospect of their consciousness continuing after death; in fact, many will be downright terrified! We will need education and support networks, using existing ones where possible, and a means of giving guidance. This is where the less academic members of the Network such as myself could play a role. We may not be brilliant scientists, but we may have other useful skills.

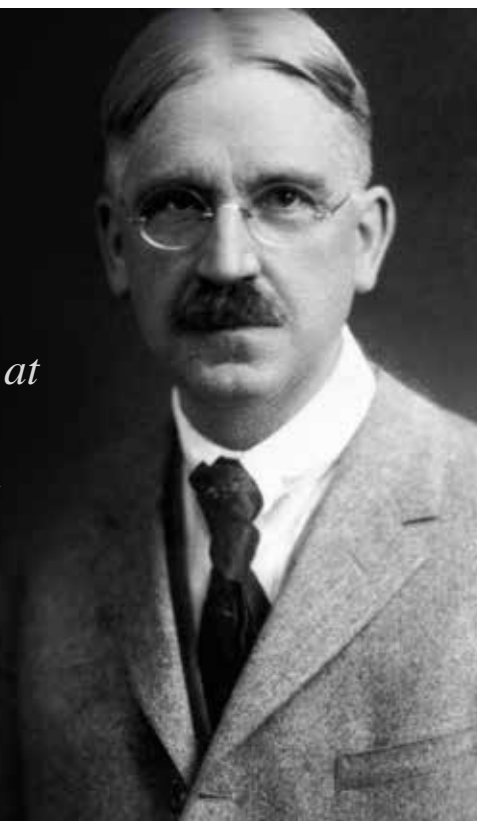
I personally think that contemporary philosophy now has in place all that is needed for a modern faith based on the emerging picture of a sort of psychic / divine 'Internet' pervading the Universe and on evolution of consciousness through many lifetimes.

“The ideal of using the present simply to get ready for the future contradicts itself. It omits, and even shuts out, the very conditions by which a person can be prepared for his future.

We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future.

This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything.”

John Dewey (1859 - 1952) American philosopher & educator





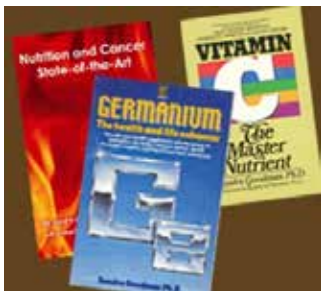
My Experience of Publishing *Positive Health* PH Online for >22 Years

by Sandra Goodman PhD

David Lorimer's invitation to describe the impact of publishing Positive Health PH Online for >22 years has provoked within me an intense period of reflection and introspection. Twenty-two+ years is, after all, a fairly long time in one person's life. Technologically speaking, thinking back to pre-1994, this was just about the very onset of emails; the internet was rudimentary, Windows hadn't yet launched Windows 95 until 1995, replacing Windows 3.1!

My Previous Career as a Research Scientist and Author

Prior to the mid-1980s, I had been a research scientist, working as a molecular biologist[3] in Canada then in the USA attempting to describe, locate and isolate plant genes involved in nitrogen fixation. Soon after arriving in the UK I was researching organic germanium, published a paper[4], then a book[5] and attempting to organise a clinical trial to test its potential clinical efficacy in HIV/AIDS. In 1989 after several lurid tabloid scandals, an article by Duncan Campbell entitled *Pretty Poison*, organic germanium was [unjustifiably] banned from sale as a nutritional supplement.[6] This sounded the death knell for research to discover whether this supplement might have been therapeutically useful against HIV/AIDS. According to Martin Walker,[7] author of *Dirty Medicine*,[8] I may have inadvertently been partly responsible in that I had submitted grant proposals to fund a clinical trial to the then Wellcome Foundation.



In the early 1990s the Cochrane Collaboration[9] [established meta-analysis protocols for evidenced-based medicine] was in its early days. This was also the time of dramatic events and negative publicity about the flawed Chilvers BCHC research study,[10] purporting to show that women with

cancer who attended Bristol Cancer Help Centre were more likely to die than women who received conventional care. The repercussions of the media storm almost closed down Bristol.[11]

Nutrition and Cancer Database, Book, Research

In 1992, Pat Pilkington convened a meeting of professionals to discuss Nutrition and Lifestyle Guidelines for people with cancer; I was appointed the lead author of the Consensus Statement document *Nutrition and Life-Style Guidelines for People with Cancer* which was published in the *Journal of Nutritional Medicine*[12] [later re-published in *Positive Health* PH Online][13] I am most impressed at how prescient it was even 22 years ago regarding providing more options for

cancer patients, and also disappointed in how little cancer treatment has progressed in directions providing patients with more options that merely chemotherapy and radiation therapy as adjunctive treatments. Pat Pilkington, who wished to put the Bristol Cancer Help Centre on a more scientifically-sound footing, commissioned me to set up a database of research publications about Nutrition and Cancer, which I did in 1993. Some of these findings were serialised in issues of the *JACM Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* - now ceased publication, Leon Chaitow the then Editor, which indirectly led to the publication of *Nutrition and Cancer - Health State-of-the-Art*. [14]

Even in 1993, I was astonished at the huge body of published evidence amassed, particularly regarding nutritional treatment approaches; however, little if any of this important, potentially life-saving information was being communicated either to researchers of the wider public interested in less dangerous / toxic and potentially more life enhancing treatments for cancer. My partner Mike Howell, who had decades of experience in typesetting and magazine publication, pointed this out, and we launched *Positive Health* in 1994 - the objective was to attempt to bridge the gap between alternative and conventional medicine. I always thought that dividing modes of health treatment into different spheres was a complete non-sequitur; I even presented a talk at Olympia in 1997 with graphic schematics of the no-entry between so-called Orthodox and Complementary Medicine, as well as a schematic for an Integrated HealthCare System.



Positive Health – Business and Development

First Decade of Expansion

Initially we worked from home - there was an advertising sales person in the kitchen, later in the conservatory. In 1995 we

then moved into offices in Queen Square, Bristol and recruited Advertising, Administration, Editorial and Production Staff. At first, we did invoices on paper, only used basic databases, DTP Software, then Quark Xpress. The first four issues of *Positive Health* were actually photocopied, then we acquired DTP software, then printed directed from film using a local

printer. We then moved to a web (not internet) -based printer, then to another web printer. After Windows 95 came Windows 98. We were printing to film - pre-press; later we produced pdf files[15] from which the magazines were printed. As we expanded, we acquired a subscription house for subscribers in the UK and internationally, and distribution to newsagents and health food stores in the UK and the USA. We also had a successful team who displayed *Positive Health* at exhibitions around the UK. Artwork was commissioned from local artists, including the design of new website home pages.



Re-organisation: 2004-2008

By 2004, the Internet and emails had evolved considerably. We decided to outsource our Subscriptions and Advertising and moved from Bristol to Portsmouth. After a few years of successful advertising with external agencies, and falling advertising sales and decline in exhibition revenue, we took back the advertising sales in-house and set up advertising sales offices and call centres and recruited additional staff.

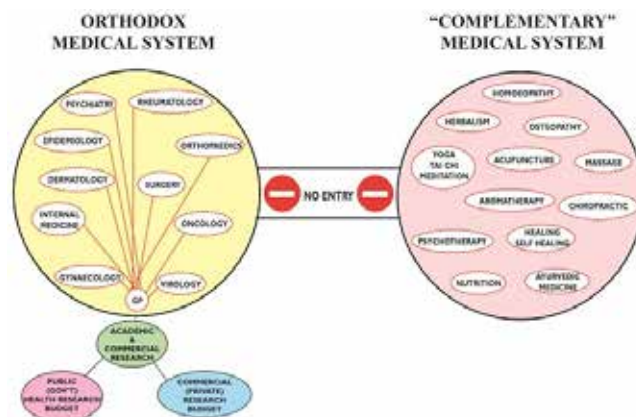
The Financial Crisis - 2008



The cost of printing mailing out *Positive Health* magazine to subscribers amounted to >£10k per month, which was becoming unsustainable. The collapse of the Banks in autumn 2008 prompted an almost immediate decline in advertising sales, magazine sales plummeted; it was decided to cease printing the magazine after Issue 150 and continue *Positive Health PH Online* with the Internet site established since 1995. As *Positive Health PH Online* had always been online since the outset of *Positive Health*,[16] the entire archive of articles was online.

Full Transition to Positive Health PH Online

At this juncture, considerable effort was expended to develop the website and its resources to promote advertisers. In early 2009, we moved to Ramsgate to enable my partner Mike to be closer to his family – daughters, their husbands and grandchildren, latterly great grandchildren. New website designs have been continually unveiled; the latest design in April 2015 with more vibrant colours and new look, featuring a StoryBoard access to PH articles; also rotating displays of Events, Product, Courses, Therapist/Clinic Listings, Topic Banners and PY ads. There is a wide choice of animated adverts and listings, for which there is unlimited text plus a graphic.



Complementary / Alternative Research - 1994 Until Now

Since 1994, when there were frequent statements that there was no research about complementary / alternative medicine, there is now a myriad of research papers[17] and articles across the multiple spectrum of disciplines.[18] The Cochrane Network which has cemented in the notion of Evidence-based Medicine [19] appears to discard research which isn't of the randomised controlled clinical trial variety, which leaves out clinical and research studies or ranks unfavourably trials which don't fit the RCT criteria. The previous invisibility-non-communication of existing research to practitioners and public has transformed over the decades into an invisibility and non-communication of natural health treatment approaches from the side of the official media and orthodox medical and pharmaceutical professions. The fragmentation of complementary practitioner associations, division and conflict among and between organisations persists. One of the most serious issues goes to the heart of what is natural treatment, indeed medical treatment *per se*: paradigm dichotomies exist and are maintained in controversial subjects: Infection / Antibiotics[20] Vaccination,[21] Cancer,[22] Heart Disease,[23] Psychiatric Drugs,[24] ME/CFS.[25]



Assaults on Holistic / Alternative Physicians, Practitioners

Prosecutions against holistic practitioners occur on a regular basis for pursuing other than mainstream approaches in cancer treatments, homeopathy, energy medicine approaches; these emanate on an industrial scale from the ASA,[26] GMC,[27] GDC,[28] Royal Veterinary College.[29] As played out regularly in the media are paradigm / evidence shifts regarding Nutrition - Cholesterol, Fats - trans fats, butter, margarine, saturated vs unsaturated fats, Sugar, Salt, Medical Crises in Diabetes, Obesity and Cancer. The failure in 2015 to progress with the Saatchi Innovation Bill [30] to pursue other than standard cancer treatment approaches has placed a severe limit on the progress of less toxic and possibly more effective long-term cancer treatments. A familiar rant of mine has been a frustrating Lack of Progress to Integrated Medicine - <http://blog.positivehealth.com/blog/> [31]

How Being a Publisher has Affected Me

Much has changed over the past 22 years, including closure of long-established retailers such as C&A, Woolworths, BHS and in Canada Eatons and Pascals. Long-trusted magazines have ceased publishing including *Here's Health*, *JACM*, and more general famous magazines such as *Time* and *Life*. Sadly, there have been deaths of innumerable prominent personalities; a few of these in the complementary world include Michael Endacott - ICM, Michael Gearin-Tosh, Pat Pilkington and Celia Wright. The sale of The Nutri Centre to Tesco in 2001, and its shocking closure in 2016.[32] As any publisher may attest, publishing is a 24/7 treadmill; as soon as one issue is published the next commences. One has to schedule and organise in almost 3 dimensions. I have been afflicted with the curse of spotting spelling and grammatical errors everywhere.

Where Positive Health PH Online Stands Today

For me, *Positive Health* PH Online has never been simply a magazine; it has always been about working to bridge the gulf between conventional and natural medicine. With the cessation of its printing as a paper magazine, PH Online, with the complete archive of all *Positive Health's* content since its inception, has been transformed into a vital, precious, independently owned body of significant publication re natural treatment approaches - >3,000 articles across 150 subjects, >3,000 Research Abstracts, Book Reviews, Letters, > 1,500 Authors. The site receives 6,556 - 8,181 visits per day; 34,640 - 52,652 page views daily. In July 2016 there were 203,576 visits, 1,073,842 Page Views, 3,744,063 Files and 3,915,967 Hits. We are currently in production with Issue 233.[33]

Positive Health - Looking to the Future

Looking to the future, PH Online must extend and enhance the PH Online educational legacy, as well as utilise the facilities and resources of the Internet to attract and generate increased and diverse revenue from advertising, enlistment of paid sponsorships, publication of e-books, research and other fundraising campaigns, to increase health awareness via conferences, YouTube, extend communications to those in positions of authority across the medical and pharmaceutical professions and continue to build bridges between complementary and conventional healthcare hierarchies and organisations. The commitment to bridge the gap between conventional and alternative medicine into a unified, integrated medicine has never wavered. It is hoped that the future will continue, indeed surpass the initial excellent work of the past 22+ years.

About the Author

Sandra Goodman PhD, Co-founder and Editor of *Positive Health*, trained as a Molecular Biology scientist in Agricultural Biotechnology in Canada and the USA. She has focused upon health issues since the 1980s in the UK. Author of 4 books, including *Nutrition and Cancer: State-of-the-Art*, *Vitamin C – The Master Nutrient*, *Germanium: The Health and Life Enhancer* and numerous articles, Dr Goodman was the lead author of the Consensus Document *Nutritional and LifeStyle Guidelines for People with Cancer* [34] and compiled the Cancer and Nutrition Database for the Bristol Cancer Help Centre in 1993.

Dr Goodman and her long-term partner Mike Howell seek individuals with the resources, structural organization and interest to continue and expand the legacy of *Positive Health* PH Online forward into the 21st century, adding facilities to conduct online seminars, fundraise for alternative cancer research, as well as to promote leading holistic organizations and businesses internationally. Follow her Blog[35] and purchase *Nutrition and Cancer: State-of-the-Art*. [36] Dr S Goodman may be contacted privately for Research, Lectures and Editorial services via: sandra@positivehealth.com www.positivehealth.com sandra@drsgoodman.com www.drsgoodman.com



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SMN Annual Gathering 8th-10th July 2016 at Horsley Park, Surrey

Rev. Kevin Tingay

Members gathered once again in the comfortable surroundings of Horsley Park, the meetings proceeded in the familiar sequence under the guidance of our new Chairman, *Dr. Paul Filmore*, and with the practicalities in the care of *David Lorimer*. *Dr. Peter Fenwick* relit the candle, reminding us of the continuity of our work as individuals and as a network. The revised Vision Statement was read and displayed on screen. All were welcomed to the Gathering.

Peter Fenwick welcomed Paul Filmore as our new Chair and presented him with the glass plaque ornamented with the names of his predecessors and entrusted it to him for the duration of his period of office. Paul received it and suitably responded.

Peter Fenwick paid tribute to the late Karl Pribram (1919-2015), an honorary member of SMN. A prominent and creative neurophysiologist, his vision of a holographic universe led him to discern in one part of a brain the possibility of seeing the whole. Unusually for a brain surgeon he moved on into neurological research. He authored over seven hundred books and scientific papers, *The Holotropic Brain* being of particular significance. A time of silence in his memory was observed.



Peter also reported on the recent Conference in Tucson, Arizona, where the original theme of previous conferences had been amended from 'Towards a Science of Consciousness' to 'The Science of Consciousness'. He noted that new theories continue to emerge. He drew our attention to the work of Jeffrey Martin of Harvard on happiness and awakening, and 'Finders' courses he had instigated. Peter would be running an internet based course before too long.

He noted two proportions had emerged which he commended too is. The first: For every philosopher there is an equal and opposite philosopher. The second: All philosophers are wrong.

Richard Irwin reported on the development of the SMN website which the Board hoped would be more helpful and informative to all. Later an instructive detailed presentation was made for interested members. Janine Edge reported briefly of the work of the SMN Charitable Trust and detailed procedures for the members Form at the AGM on Sunday.

On Saturday morning we had two talks. **Chris Thomson** spoke on *Conscious Evolution: from the Esoteric to the Exoteric*. He discerns five significant trends in our evolution (which he defines as hereditary successful adaptations) of which we can be conscious and have profound implications for science. He sees changes that can be discerned in or physical organism; our consciousness and intelligence; knowledge and understanding; character development toward greater truthfulness and capability; growth in capacity and ability. He illustrated these with verbal and pictorial examples. He summed up by suggesting that we may be able to observe the following: the growth of self-determination, the impossible becoming possible, the complex becoming simple, the esoteric becoming exoteric, and the paranormal becoming normal.

He envisaged future evolution as manifesting the combination of both physical and non-physical consciousness; deeper understanding reconciling science and esoteric knowledge; individuals with the courage to be as they really are; and greater and more widespread demonstration of practical and embodied wisdom bringing ideals into concrete manifestation.

Dr Mick Collins' title was *Doing and the Next Evolutionary Threshold*. Mick is an Occupational Therapist, recently retired

from full-time teaching at the University of East Anglia. His book *The Unselfish Spirit* describes his thesis. He explored the importance of 'doing' in times of spiritual crisis. He described his own personal journey and how he could make his interior experience relate to wider society. He had been influenced by the teachings of Buddhism, J. Krishnamurti and Carl Jung. He spoke of the transformative role of our imaginative capacity. He quoted Jacob Bronowski's remark that 'The imagination is like a telescope in time', and from Humberto Maturana, 'Everything we do is a structural dance in the choreography of co-existence', and Buckminster Fuller 'I seem to be a verb'.

He drew further on Herbert Marcuse and on Carl Jung. These and others had pointed out that industrial culture had lost sight of the inner world of myth, ritual, connectedness, spirituality, and the numinous. In the light of crises in his own journey Mick told of his visit to Jung's tower at Bollingen and of further significant experiences that had led him on both personally and professionally. He invited us to reflect on the question as to the reality of our *daimon* and our relationship with it. He wanted to define *eudaimonia* as 'blessing' rather than just happiness, and that 'doing' was as vital as 'being', and that 'doing in depth' was the key.

In the shorter session we heard a fascinating presentation from **Degard** on her development of 'Aetheric' Art using example of her own work of portraiture but stressing the application of her concept of 'Aethericism' in all the arts. **Marilyn Monk**, a stalwart of the work of SMN, spoke on the

Alexander Technique and its importance in the evolution of consciousness. Your reporter, whose bi-location techniques are somewhat rusty, did not hear the presentations of **Clement Jewitt** and **Edi Bilimoria** (the latter standing in at short notice for a speaker who was unable to attend) but was assured that were of interest and stimulating to those who attended. **John Poynton**, whose book on Michael Whiteman was reviewed in *Network Review No.120*, spoke on Evolution and Psychic Ability. Drawing on his professional insights as a zoologist he raised issues on the alleged psychic abilities of animals, but more importantly on ethical and social questions that might arise if psychic abilities became more widespread in our culture. Might such trends be a revolution in the making?

Richard Irwin introduced us to a healing meditation through recorded music of his own composition which related to the chakras through the ancient modal scales. A welcome opportunity to experience rest at deeper levels after a busy and stimulating day.

On Sunday, after the formalities of the AGM, Mick Collins introduced the Members' Forum with an exercise involving us in groups of two. Under the firm hand of **Janine Edge** (who restrained members of the Board from pre-emptive strikes) we then engaged in a discussion of a wide variety of topics. Creative and constructive ideas on the future of the Network were aired. Peter Fenwick drew this part of the proceedings, and then the Gathering, to a close with his usual panache, thanking all who had taken part.





39th Mystics and Scientists : “Non-locality and the oneness of mind”

15-17 April 2016 at Horsley Park

Dr Elizabeth Archer

There was a good turnout for this meeting, with plenty of familiar faces and some new ones. The theme of the conference had clearly intrigued members and non-members alike, and an excellent line up of speakers had been assembled.

Paul Filmore welcomed us and lit the candle, then **Peter Fenwick** opened the conference. He said that the topics of non-locality and oneness of mind are becoming increasingly important, and quoted studies using hyper-scanning to investigate communication from brain to brain over distance as an example of new research in this field. Peter then introduced **David Lorimer's talk**, which was entitled “**Empathic Resonance: Non-locality and the Universal Mind**”. As always, David was able to set out clearly the important underlying themes and questions for our weekend together. He began with a filmed interview with the Hungarian pianist Gyorgi Sebok describing an experience of “channeling” a piece of music, which he then went on to perform. David drew attention to the almost transcendent expression on Sebok's face as he played. He then spoke of the mystics and scientists conference in 1983, at which David Bohm and Rupert Sheldrake had spoken, and which had led to him writing his book “Whole in One”.

David summarised some of the themes in his book, which looks at the psycho-spiritual journey through life towards the individuated, selfless, compassionate and wise ‘Self’. David then discussed panoramic memory, which may be experienced during NDE life reviews and suggests a deep level connection between all of us.



Many commentators have pointed towards a new way of thinking about mind and consciousness, emphasising the primacy of the inner over the outer. The mind is fundamental and creative, consciousness is universal, and thinking works from the inside outwards. The world without is a reflection of the world within, and it is the world within that creates the world without. David concluded his talk by suggesting that at a deep level we *are* one another, which highlights the importance of developing an ethic of interconnectedness, and the Golden Rule. One might even ask “is the universe one great thought?”.



The first conference session was with **Larry Dossey**, who gave a rich and fascinating talk **“One Mind: How Our Individual Mind is Part of the Greater Consciousness and Why it Matters”**. Larry noted the increasing interest in spirituality in modern medicine and how it is showing up in many guises. Apparently, over 70% of US medical schools feature courses on the spirituality of health, and the US Joint Committee on Accreditation now requires all candidates to show appropriate attention to the spiritual needs of their patients.

Larry then described three different eras in medicine: Era I, in which consciousness is regarded as being confined to the brain, the mind and body are seen as mechanistic, and where the emphasis is on medication and intervention. Era II, which began following the Second World War, and saw the development of interest in the mind-body relationship (eg stress management, yoga, meditation, biofeedback, massage, music therapy).

We are now into Era III medicine, which may best be described as “non-local” medicine. It is deeply connected with healing intent, and implies that illness is not localised to specific parts of the mind or body, or even to a single person. We must also remember that Eras I, II and III overlap, and are not mutually exclusive.

Larry expanded on the view that consciousness is fundamental and irreducible, and that matter is derivative from it - an idea which has been expressed by a number of prominent scientists and philosophers. Underlying Era III medicine is spirituality, and studies have indicated that people following a spiritual or religious path live 7 - 13 years longer than those who do not, with less major disease. Larry reviewed the evidence in support of Era III themes, grouped into three types - nonhuman experiments, human studies, and reports of spontaneous remission from disease. (There are further details about this evidence in the on-line version of this article.) With respect to spontaneous healings, Larry suggested that they occur more commonly than conventional science would have us believe. Doctors and scientists are afraid of their colleagues' opinions, or that reporting them may reflect badly on their professional standing. One such example is the well-documented miraculous healing of a four-year-old child in Baltimore in 1952. Her healing from fatal leukaemia, through prayer, was declared a miracle by the Vatican. The healing event was well documented in her medical notes, but her doctor admitted that he had never written up the case because he was afraid to do so. The Institute of Noetic Sciences' book *Spontaneous Healings: An Annotated Bibliography* (Hirschberg and O'Reagan), documents numerous 'spontaneous' healings and is the most comprehensive book on this subject. So what is the explanation for these phenomena? There is no evidence to support transmission theories, but another possible explanation is the existence of non-local connections, perhaps arising from quantum entanglement. However, science does not address compassion, healing, and human love, and quantum entanglement alone cannot explain them. We remain almost completely ignorant of the nature of consciousness, and have no idea how consciousness emerges from the physical brain. He concludes that the evidence that some aspects of consciousness are non-local and infinite in is compelling. Consciousness appears to be independent of the body, exists in the “now”, and is indestructible. In some sense all minds must be part of a single unitary mind, and evidence from parapsychology seems to link all forms of consciousness to a unitary whole.

Significantly, the evidence points to a collective global aspect to personal health, and that the health of one person is connected with the health of every other person on this planet. This presents important ethical considerations, and gives rise to another version of the Golden Rule - that we should be kind to others *because they are us*. Without this awareness we may not survive as a species.

The next presentation was by **Tom McLeish** on the subject **“Non-local Quantum and Classical Physics: the Idea of Strong Emergence”**. Tom conducted us on a whistle stop tour of his fascinating work with the Durham Emergence Project with great enthusiasm and humour, and did his best to take us with him into some pretty complex descriptions of the direction of causality, the fractional quantum Hall effect, topological emergence, and (his own area of interest) the physics of ring polymers! To the mystics amongst us it was quite a stretch, but I can happily report that all his ideas came together beautifully at the end when he made a plea for the development of a “theology of science”. The main theme of the science part of his talk was around emergence, which is when entities possess non-reducible characteristics not shared by their constituent parts, and the direction of causality. The Durham Emergence Project, funded by the Templeton Foundation, has brought philosophers and physicists together in order to explore the question: are all phenomena reducible to the atomic level? The project is providing a remarkable opportunity for science and the humanities to come together to share their different insights - allowing, as Tom put it, “wonderful things to begin to happen”. He explained emergence using the metaphor of taking Lego blocks to build a Lego house and then asking, do the houses have novel characteristics which are not shared by the bricks? In the same way we can ask, do biological entities have emergent, non-reducible characteristics which are not shared by their constituent parts?

Biological entities are not just operating at the level of the lowest level of the system, which would suggest top-down causation, and Tom used the example of protein molecules operating in the lipid cell membrane as an example. He then compared the characteristics of weak versus strong emergence, and used the fractional quantum Hall effect to explain how emergent structures are intrinsically relational, non-local, and causally more than the sum of their parts. In answer to his own question “are non-local, topologically emergent, relational entities confined to quantum physics?” he explained how these characteristics are observed in the polymers that he works with.

Tom concluded by talking passionately about how science desperately lacks the deep cultural narrative that could enable us to address our need for knowledge and counter our fears. Modern science is a source of harm rather than benefit, and is perceived to impoverish well-being, paralyse public debate, and obscure the notion of purpose. The relationship between science and religion has become distorted, and we need a theology of science that is participative, relational and co-creative. In his view, non-locality and ‘oneness’ are no longer speculative, and we are already looking for a deep connection between classical and quantum physics.

The ensuing discussion between Tom and Larry highlighted the huge gap that still exists between the sort of work Larry has described and Tom's bench top physics, and both speakers agreed that it would be wonderful if we could find a way to bring these two streams together.

During the afternoon I decided to attend Helen Ford's workshop entitled “The Sixth Sense”. The other option was to join David Lorimer for a session of Paneurhythmy. Helen took us through some exercises to help us see auras, and to sense another person's ‘soul truth’ through touch. This proved to be a little challenging for some of us, and it was perhaps over-optimistic to attempt subtle experiential work in the ‘uncontained’ and busy setting of the lecture hall! Then Helen delivered her talk **“Harnessing the Power of Soul”**.

She started by described how she had the ability to “see” when she was a child, but because this psychic ability was rejected by her parents, she shut down. Instead, she did what her parents expected of her. Later, while sitting in the library at school, she had a peak experience in which she saw that everything is love. And later still, at medical school,

she found herself wanting to understand what it was that made people ill. In her view, we incarnate from light, and that light has the capacity to create perfection if it can flow. Light enters through the crown and the body becomes energised by it. However, certain factors prevent this flow of light into the body, such as holding distorted beliefs about ourselves. Our beliefs about ourselves and our lives will generate a persona (our public face, personality or role), and will prompt us to take on and pursue whatever will achieve the things we believe we want. To do this, we focus outside ourselves rather than on our inner experience, and when our reference point is outer, we may end up seeking external rewards to compensate for an inner sense of worthlessness.

At the very earliest stage in our lives, in utero, we may become imprinted by our mother's feelings about herself and her life. If she is feeling depressed or worthless, the child will take it on, and will also take on responsibility for giving the mother her sense of worth. The child will experience powerful pressure to do what ever makes the him/her socially acceptable. If we end up rejecting our proper soul path as a result of all these influences, the soul will go into "retreat". This is especially likely if our chosen life path brings a lot of other - outer - rewards. The worst scenario is when the soul's true path is simultaneously rejected by ourselves *and* the people around us, and with our soul in full retreat we may come to feel that life is not worth living.

Helen described her belief that seeing the truth in others opens the heart, and in turn, those who have been 'seen' know that they have been seen. We need to teach our children that they will fit in if they are true to themselves, and that in doing so they will radiate light and energy and bring people along with them. It is unfortunate that parents often try to "socialise" their children to fit in with external requirements, rather than encouraging them to live their own truth. Other people's judgements can be crippling to a child, and these shocks will be registered in the aura. Later experiences that resembles the original trauma will provoke and reinforce that person's original defensive response. What is worse, those who have shut down on their own soul-self may attack other people who they perceive to be "doing their own thing", since the perpetrators cannot bear to be reminded of their own loss. They will experience jealousy at others' joy and pleasure, though they may also experience guilt when they act to crush it.

Helen asserts that we must seek to undo the reflex patterns that we have developed to protect ourselves against shocks. We need to be alert to signs that our soul is retreating, and identify the things that trigger our defensive reflexes. She then suggested exercises we may try to help us to understand our triggers and self-protective responses, and ways in which we might begin to work with them by bringing the quality of pure love to them.

The model that Helen put forward to explain both her own story - and our general experience as human beings - is congruent with current psychological models for the effects



of trauma. Adding the dimension of soul to the psychological models adds depth to those interpretations, and opens them up to a transpersonal, one mind element. I would have been very interested to hear more about her life story, both by way of explanation of her own learning, and of her development as a practitioner. An open and honest account of her own soul journey could offer others a powerful insight into the process involved in finding and expressing our unique soul's calling. The core message that Helen is offering is an important one for us all.

Saturday evening's entertainment on a showing of the Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring*, which I found utterly absorbing. Slow-moving and visually exquisite, it is an unflinching depiction of Samsara in the context of Korean Zen Buddhism.

On Sunday morning **Larry Dossey** continued with his talk, subtitled "**Souls, Creativity and Healing**". He started with a taboo question in Medicine today, which is: does the concept of the soul have a place in science? He referred to Ian Stevenson's work on reincarnation and biology, which raises the possibility of life after death., and to C. G. Jung, who believed that the search for an understanding of what happens after death is central to a man's life. The soul is a spiritual or immaterial part of the human being which is regarded as immortal, and it is Larry's belief that the fear of annihilation at death has caused more suffering than anything else, even disease. Medicine rejects the concept of soul because it still asserts that mind is synonymous with brain, that we are nothing more than a body, and that nothing survives death. The dominant view remains that consciousness is produced by neural activity alone. "Promissory materialism" asserts that science will someday arrive at a complete, materialistic explanation of everything, including consciousness. So how do we approach the question of soul in the face of science's denial? We need to establish whether matter derives from consciousness, or the other way round, and whether or not consciousness is non-local and/or infinite in time.

Pim van Lommel's work on NDEs suggests that our consciousness may separate from the body, which, in Larry's view, implies that consciousness is unitary, omnipresent, and unbounded by space-time.

He regards the evidence for telesomatic events as important support for the concept of oneness of mind, and quotes the case of the 4 year old identical twins Sylvia and Marta Lander. One sister burned her hand so badly that it blistered, and her sister was observed to develop a similar blister, in the same location and at exactly the same time, even though she was several miles away. This is an example of "twin telepathy". Larry told us about his own experience of being an identical twin, and how telesomatic experiences were not unknown to him and his family. His explanatory model is that the brain acts as a filter, modifying and reducing what comes in so as to prevent overwhelm and thus aid survival. But in doing so, the brain also screens out much that is valuable to us. We need to unblock our brain filter before we can access universal mind, and open up to all of man's thoughts, feelings and experience. Arthur Koestler suggests that creative thought in science and art is the result of tapping into universal mind, and Thomas Edison was explicit that his ideas and creations came out of "impressions from the universe" that he could then develop.

In 1993 Rita Klaus published the story of her 'miraculous' healing from multiple sclerosis in *Rita's Story*. She had had a vision of the Virgin Mary during an episode of near drowning, and subsequently entered a convent. But while there she became severely affected by multiple sclerosis and later had to leave. Progressive disability eventually confined her to a wheelchair, and in time she lost her faith. She went for healing, but with no benefit, then had another vision of the Virgin Mary. This time she was told simply to ask for healing, which she did, and the next day spontaneous healing

of her disabilities began. Another means by which we may gain insight into illness is through dreams, as described in *She Who Dreams: A Journey into Healing Through Dream Work* by Wanda Burch. This phenomenon is currently being investigated by radiologist and medical intuitive, Larry Burk, but he has yet to report his results. Larry set out four basic principles that can help us to unblock the filter function of our brains, access our spirituality and transcend our egos. They can be summarized as: turn off your smart phone, sit down, be quiet, and pay attention!

Larry went on to talk about the difficulties in developing research methodologies that are ecologically valid. For example, studies on the therapeutic effects of prayer use prayer in a way that no-one ever uses it in real life! Moreover, nature does not conform to the rules and methodologies we choose for our research, and we still do not have the means to calibrate things like empathy or compassion. He suggested that our research efforts should focus more attention on spontaneous healings and 'miracles'. He ended with a warning about hexes, curses and spells. Referring to his earlier book *Be Careful What You Pray For*, Larry pointed out that negative prayers are as real as positive ones. We need to pay attention to protecting ourselves from negative energies, so that we do not become 'sitting ducks' for the negative energies that exist in One Mind.

The morning continued with **Marja de Vries's** presentation "**The Whole Elephant Revealed**", which explored the universal principles underlying all the world's wisdom traditions. Marja managed to pack a huge amount of information into her talk, and it was fascinating to see how she brought these ideas together so coherently. She explained the title of the talk (and her book) by telling the story of five blind men describing an elephant, in which each man arrived at a different understanding according to which part of the elephant he had touched. It is futile to argue about which interpretation is right or wrong, since each man had access to only one part of a greater truth. When Marja set out on her own exploration of "the elephant" she found that all sorts of resources became available to her with respect to the wisdom traditions, but she also sought to investigate how Western science is trying to establish universal principles. The book sets out seven laws:

First, the Law of Oneness: everything comes from the same source and has the same essence, which is universal consciousness. Thus, everything is connected with everything else. Second, the Law of Correspondence: the universe is layered, with one level of matter and several non-physical layers which are partly inside and partly outside time and space. The seven universal laws operate at all levels, and we

are in connection with all levels and the universal at all times. Third, the Law of Vibration: everything is energy, both positive and negative, and therefore is vibrating. Different aspects of this energy include harmonic resonance, love and/or power, attraction, the mirror principle, attention, and surrender. Fourth, the Law of Polarity: all things are relative, and 'truth' shifts according to our purpose or state of consciousness. Fifth, the Law of Rhythm: everything is in a process of change, and different parts are changing at different rates. The pattern of cyclical change is actually a spiral, moving towards greater complexity and expansion of consciousness. Sixth, the Law of Cause and Effect: causes and effects may operate at different levels. This law is the origin of the Golden Rule. Lastly, the Law of Dynamic Balance: everything exists around a movement inward (feminine - integration and growth) and outward (masculine - disintegration), and the two movements need to be complementary and in dynamic balance. Ideally, we should aim for a balance which is weighted towards the feminine, since this enables the masculine and the feminine to meet most effectively.

Marja talked about how the seven laws work together across time and space, energy and matter, and illustrated her ideas by means of a complex diagrammatic picture. There was insufficient time for her to explore fully the implications of the insights from her work, nor how it might influence our choices, both personally and as a society. She believes all children are born in a natural state of dynamic balance, and that we must strive to maintain that balance. Sadly, our approach to child-rearing, education, and the enforcement of societal norms tends towards dynamic imbalance. We could choose to do things differently, and this is the subject of Marja's second book, which (unfortunately for us in the UK) has yet to be translated into English.

The conference concluded on Sunday afternoon with an Open Forum, at which the panel of speakers took questions from the floor. (See the website version of this report for some of the Q&As.) The conference was brought to a close with thanks being given to all the speakers and organisers, followed by the blowing out of the candle. Thus ended another highly enjoyable and engaging Mystics and Scientists conference, which addressed a hugely important topic. As always, a lively and eclectic mix of people had turned out, and our many conversations over meals and coffee became an essential part of the whole experience. Larry Dossey's wisdom, warmth and humour brought a very special quality to the weekend, and provided a rich and spacious context for the weekend's other presentations and discussions, which were generally excellent. Larry's description of Era III Medicine is both bold and visionary, and could well become a benchmark for future developments in health care. Sadly, my impression of medical practice in our increasingly strained and cash-strapped NHS is that we are moving backwards to Era I Medicine, rather than forwards to Era III! However, this conference has given me hope, since it is clear that there is a huge amount of important and relevant research going on, and that there is a strong community of inspired (and inspiring) doctors, scientists, philosophers and 'mystics' working towards a more connected, holistic and compassionate world. I went home well satisfied, with plenty to contemplate - and eagerly anticipating next year's event!

Liz Archer is a retired NHS General Practitioner, who has also trained as an energy healer. Her interests include non-conventional approaches to science, economics, health care and medical anthropology, she has taught courses for medical students on holistic health care and cross cultural approaches to medicine, and on climate change and sustainability. Liz follows the Zen Buddhist teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh and belongs to the Community of Interbeing. Since retiring from the NHS she has returned to classical ballet classes, sings in an opera chorus, and occasionally dons a red nose to clown. She lives in Brighton.





Promoting our Members – Richard Irwin

The new SMN web site at <https://explore.scimednet.org> is coming along with daily updates to information. We have a number of priorities in the design work we are implementing, in addition to providing information to our members and, hopefully attracting new members.

Specifically, we have created the ability for members to create an extensive profile about themselves which includes: biographical, bibliographic information as well as many categories of special interest.

- The bibliographic information can be used by our web team to link a member's books to Amazon to promote sales, so please email webteam@scimednet.org if you want us to do this for you once your profile is complete.
- The Special Interest information allows a simple click on a topic that allows you to find other members with the same interest. If you would like to create a Special Interest Group on the web site for discussions, again, please let the web team know by emailing webteam@scimednet.org.

The directors would also like to extend an invitation to members to submit articles for consideration for inclusion on the web site. These may be concerning the areas of research you are conducting, or things you believe will be of interest to your fellow members. Please email David Lorimer with the details at dl@scimednet.org. To gain maximum value for all members we need members to participate. If you have any difficulties using the site, we have a support forum for members at <https://explore.scimednet.org/groups/support-group/forum/> and we would be delighted to hear from you.



John Kapp joined the Board as treasurer at the AGM in July.

He joined the SMN in 2005, and was secretary of the Sussex group from then till 2010 when it folded. He is interested in 'beyond materialism' as his father (Prof Reginald Kapp 1885-1966) wrote 4 books on the subject (republished on www.reginaldkapp.org).

He was company secretary of Overlord sailing club from 1965-69, the Brighton West Pier Trust from 1984-89, founded and ran Marabu Sailing Club from 1979-2000, and founded in 2010 the Social Enterprise Complementary Therapy Company (SECTCo) see www.sectco.org.uk.



Dave King – New board member

Dave is a third year graduate medical student at King's College London with a research interest in non-ordinary states of consciousness and psychedelic-assisted psychiatry. He completed his undergraduate degree in Medical Anthropology at the University of Kent in 2011.

Dave is a founding co-director of Breaking Convention and programme chair for their biennial international conference on psychedelic consciousness, as well as the founding President of the King's College Society for Psychedelic Studies and commissioning editor of the Psychedelic Press journal. He co-directs the Public Engagement Programme in Drug Assisted Psychotherapies at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, and is the marketing director for the KCL Neuroscience Society.

He has previously worked as a researcher in immunology at the National University of Singapore, a haemodialysis assistant for the NHS and as assistant to Amanda Feilding at the Beckley Foundation. At Beckley, he was signatory liaison officer for a public letter signed by 60 former heads of state, Nobel laureates and public figures.

Dave has been involved in the organisation of conferences and lecture series at the University of Kent, University of Greenwich, King's College London, National University of Singapore and the House of Lords. He is the co-editor of two books, with a third in press, and author of a number of journal articles, book chapters, open letters and literary pieces.



Network Books and Library – Has anyone got some space?

David Lorimer writes: As readers will know, I receive up to 300 books a year for review. I add a few of these to my own library, but the vast majority could form part of a gradually expanding Network Library. In addition, there are 750 books given by Peter Hewitt when he died a few years ago, as well as another 12 boxes in Scotland.

12 boxes were sent down to the Mystics and Scientists conference this year, and a few have been sold, also at the annual meeting. However, there are still some eight boxes in the office.

Other members have indicated a willingness to donate books to a Network Library or Centre, but we do not currently have such a place. If any member, preferably within reach of London, could help, even with storage space, please send me an email dl@scimednet.org

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, email address 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 and orders for books, services etc.
- book early for conferences - it helps you get a place
- 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 remember to gift aid when you make a payment (subscription, conference fees, etc..) - it maximises funds available for more important things.

Office hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm Monday - Friday. Please leave a message if no one is available to take your call. We will get back to you as soon as we can.

MEMBERS' NEWS

PAUL ROBERTSON 1952-2016

Martin Redfern writes:



Professor Paul Robertson died peacefully early on July 26th. He was a brilliant violinist, founder and leader of the Medici String Quartet. His keen intellect and ability to combine musical ideas with psychology, spirituality and personal narrative found expression in his visiting Professorships at several universities and in his founding of the Music Mind Spirit Trust.

Many SMN members will remember his regular appearances at conferences, giving both recitals and erudite talks. On one occasion he brought a group of Baroque dancers and accompanied them with Bach. On another, in 2007, he interviewed the late Sir John Tavener who was so impressed with the discussion on near death experiences that he announced that he would compose a work for four string quartets and Tibetan temple bowl: 'Towards Silence' represents the levels of consciousness approaching death.

The next year, just as the work was completed, first Tavener then Robertson suffered major heart failure; each were in coma for several weeks. Neither recovered fully but both were able to go on to see Towards Silence performed live and in a surround-sound installation at Winchester Cathedral and other sacred spaces. Amazingly, Paul was able to piece together a narrative of his near-death experiences. Some were horrific. One was sublime, with a woman's voice singing exquisite Indian ragas to a goddess. When asked by Tavener whether, if he could put the clock back he would go through those experiences again, Paul after a pause replied, 'Yes, but I'd say so through clenched teeth! His reflections on his life and near-death experiences are published by Faber in his book *Soundscapes: a Musician's Journey through Life and Death*.

Paul felt that he had been given eight extra years for a purpose. That included seeing Towards Silence to fruition, further establishing the Music Mind and Spirit Trust, making provision for his family (he leaves his wife Chika, son Caspian and daughters Thais and Calista) and completing his book. With those done, he did not want to return to risking major surgery and prepared for death. After months a few weeks at home, he spent his last days at an excellent hospice in Farnham. In the early hours of July 26th, his breathing was changing and his family played him Towards Silence. When it ended, he took one last, soft breath. A blackbird sang at the open window.

A few days later, Chika woke with a start, secure in the knowledge that he had 'arrived' safely. She says she doesn't know if the words of the message she received are hers or his. Indeed, the source may be one. Here is an extract.

It is beautiful – beautiful beyond imagining...simply beautiful!
 ... Beautiful beyond what can be imagined or created.
 This Creation - the Source is the flowering of Creation.
 I am the Truth. I am the Source itself. I am Wisdom beyond the graves.
 I am the Light, the Love, the All-encompassing.
 ... I speak – not to tell but to share.
 Be at one – it is the only way. Create your independence. It is yours to use. It is my gift.
 Be at Peace. Go in Peace.
 Get your sleep, in peace and tranquillity. Without it we cannot make the journey.

The Institute for Archetypal and Religious Studies (ISAR) - Paul Kieniewicz writes:

Last April my wife and I co-founded the Institute for Archetypal and Religious Studies, set in the picturesque Polish countryside 100 km from Krakow. It is located in the historical manor house and surrounding park of Sichow Duzy. We offer a space fostering psychological and spiritual development through workshops, conferences and retreats. Having both conference and residential facilities, we encourage outside groups to choose us as a destination for their conferences.

One of our major tasks is the healing of collective and cultural trauma here in Poland. Though the Occupation and Holocaust of 1939-1945 happened seventy years ago, its psychological and spiritual fallout is felt to this day. Generations are haunted by complex feelings of shame. To address this, we offer in October the workshop, "Words that Remember – The phenomenon of Holocaust literature". The workshop will use poetry

as a container to speak to the traumatic events of the Holocaust, using the tools of depth psychology. Events will be led by leading Jungian psychologists: Armand Volkas (Playback Theatre), Karni Ishai from Israel, and Frank Seeburger, with other talks by Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, and Tomasz Zukowski.

In 2017, we will host the Scientific and Medical Network for a European conference. We will also offer conferences on Psychology and Alchemy, Cultural Trauma, Meister Eckhart and workshops on meditation and contemplative prayer.

For more information, please visit our website (Polish and in English) at www.isar.edu.pl.



Dr Alan Sanderson – Co-Author needed

At 85, I've retired from therapy and am planning my first book. 'Dying to Know' addresses the death taboo, so prevalent in western society.

I'll be focusing on the many psychic phenomena which challenge scientific materialism, with the aim of showing death as a step in our spiritual journey, a transition, not a termination. My book will be different from many which have been written about psychic phenomena, in that it is written not for intellectuals and therapists, but for ordinary people with less focused interests. It will use a lighter, simpler style. In the book, psychic phenomena will feature as the White Crows of William James' formulation.

So far, I've written three chapters and I have a pretty clear idea of how the book will develop. I'm at the story-telling stage. Accounts, mostly from other publications, will need to be carefully selected. I need help to make the book a page-turner, as good as it can be. I need a partner (either co-author or ghost-writer) who knows how to put a book together and can bring creativity, and enthusiasm to the task. The ability to fit into my quirky style of writing would be an asset.

Inquiries to Alan Sanderson. alan.sanderson@talktalk.net

LOCAL GROUPS

LONDON GROUP

CLAUDIA NIELSEN – 0207 431 1177, claudia@cnielsen.eu

To read reports from other meetings, go to the *REPORTS* page of the London Group page of the Network's website. If you don't live in London but wish to be advised of London events, please drop me an email and I shall add your e-address to the circulation list.



May

Our speaker this month was **Andrew Rawlinson PhD**, who taught Buddhism for 20 years. He is also the author of *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions* in which he offers a creative taxonomy of spiritual masters. His latest book is *The Hit: Into the Rock'n'Roll Universe and Beyond*, and this evening he explored those ideas in a talk he entitled **The Hit: Derangement and Revelation**. Although the book addresses primarily the *hit* in Rock'n'Roll, it also contains examples of the *hit* in other areas of life and culture. This evening's talk concentrated on its phenomenology and the philosophical underpinnings.

Andrew started by stating that he would not define the *hit* because he says, everybody knows what it is, so he described his own experiences, in a bid to explain what he meant. His first *hit* was age 18, when he was

on Mount Olympus in Greece and an electric storm broke out of the blue. A lightning simultaneous with its attending thunder shocked him into a *hit* in which he had a realisation of the experience of nothingness. Two other examples followed, once when he injected himself leaving a bubble in the syringe which caused his heart to beat on nothing which caused him to have the same experience of being *hit*. The third example happened in meditation when he found himself with no sense of physical position, he didn't know who he was, what time it was or where he was. Other examples followed both from his own life and from other people's. All *hits* are the same, Andrew says, irrespective whether small, as when one 'gets' a joke, or big as in the realisation that the nature of reality is beyond one's comprehension. The *hit* is not knowledge or accomplishment, it is realisation.

Both meanings of the word apply: realisation as in making something real, and realisation as in insight. The *hit* is a realisation of being alive and there is only one question: what is it like to be alive? With only one answer: to be alive. The *hit* knocks you out of yourself, to strip back identity to the point of knowing who you are is no longer important. The *hit* is revelation, it is grace. The *hit* can come through love or death, through fear or surrender. The *hit* is enlightenment coming through. The realisation of the paradox that opposites are true is a *hit*. Love is the easiest thing and it is also the most difficult. Love and death are only separate from the outside. When close to death, we realise that only love really matters. And all love is the same. Whether between parents and children, between lovers, love of nature, the *hit* of love is the same. Impediments can lead to *hits*. Nothing in life must be rejected, everything is meaningful. There was not a lot of time left to discuss the derangement aspect of the *hit*, but for people who are interested, the book website is, <http://thehitbook.com>.

And if you wish to find out even more, Andrew also gave an interview to Conscious TV <http://bcove.me/2ogiigof>.



June

John Hands was our speaker for the June meeting, presenting his newly published book, *Cosmosapiens: Human Evolution from the Origin of the Universe*. John explained that he had to write this book, which took 10 years to complete, because he could not find the answers to questions he had in the current literature. His aim was to understand humanity and its place in the Universe and for this he set out to investigate

what science sees as facts, uncovering in the process the limitations of science in answering fundamental questions. John points out that much of the early data which would explain matters of evolution, for instance, have been irretrievably lost in the development of the planet from very early times, in addition to which the selection plus interpretation of data such as there is, is necessarily questionable.

Importantly, John argues, these flawed theories have become beliefs, which in turn lead to the suppression of alternative theories. Materialism is the domain and pillar of credibility of science, and yet there is much which cannot be tested empirically. Examples mentioned include the origin and reason for the existence of physical and chemical laws, the origin of matter and energy, and how to explain the narrow conditions which allow life to exist on planet Earth. We were given examples of those arguments against the background that many theories are explained by mathematical models, with facts being mapped onto these models and unknowns often artificially created to explain dissonances. Dark matter and dark energy are examples, having been introduced by scientists in order to bring coherence to their mathematical models to explain the physical nature of the universe. Another example is the Concordance Model, a mathematical model which is based on the assumption that the Universe is homogeneous, yet observations and experimentations show that this is not the case.

Economic predictions show that mathematical models are not reliable, yet as John pointed out, the current paradigm of evolution is Neo Darwinism which uses mathematical models. Neo Darwinism has become a belief system, and in his book John shows that it causes the destruction, not the evolution of species. He argues that collaboration, not competition, is at the root of evolution. He spelt out what he sees are the 4 laws of biological evolution:

1. Competition and rapid environmental change causes the extinction of species.
2. Collaboration causes the evolution of species.
3. Animals evolve by progressive complexification and centration along fusing and diverging lineages that lead to stasis in all but one lineage.
4. A rise in consciousness correlates with increasing collaboration, complexification and centration.

The human is the only species that has reflexive consciousness, which transforms and generates new abilities. This marks a difference in kind, not only in degree, from other animals. Uniquely, humans are the self-reflective agents of our future evolution says John, for good or ill. John's website is <http://johnhands.com>. (See also review of John's book below)



July

In July, we hosted **Usama Hasan** who addressed the subject of the ISIS crisis. Usama was an astronomer and, in his academic life, taught at Middlesex University and at the Greenwich Observatory. For the past 4 years, however, he has been senior researcher in Islamic Studies at the Quilliam Foundation, a Muslim led think tank which aims to challenge extremist narratives while

advocating pluralistic, democratic alternatives that are consistent with universal human rights standards. It stands for religious freedom, equality, human rights and democracy.

For every aspect of this evening's talk, Usama referred to relevant publications from the Quilliam foundation. These publications address the current debate about the Islamist threat and are free to download.

Usama acknowledged the dangers ISIS is posing to civilians in countries throughout Europe and the world, and pointed out that in Iraq and Syria civilians are killed on an unacceptable scale every day of the week. We heard some statistics: ISIS is estimated to have between 30 to 100,000 foreign fighters from every nation on Earth. From Western Europe the number is estimated to be 5,000, of which 25% are white skinned young people and out of which 10% are women. These young Western Europeans are converts to Islam and are mainly thought to be unemployed people from depressed areas, who are seduced by the idea of becoming heroes for God, earning a reward in the afterlife. These are the foot soldiers of the war. Many others who have joined however, are highly educated, they become leaders and join not a religion, but an ideology. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS for instance, has a PhD in Islamic Studies from Baghdad University.

The beliefs that motivates these leaders are rooted in the apocalyptic notions of ancient Abrahamic religions including Islam, which talk of the end of the world and this is what ISIS wishes to accelerate. In those prophecies, it is understood that certain areas of the Middle East, including Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Damascus etc. will be within the domain of God, and will be spared the apocalyptic end of time. This is the caliphate as defined geographically. Caliphate is a Sunni political model with Sharia as its law. Sharia means law of the land, and what is not widely known is that there is not one Sharia, but many, all of them incorporating an ethical element. There is a debate as to what is primary in Sharia, revelation or reason, but what is certain is that Sharia in Islam is constantly evolving, especially in regard to women's rights. Jihad, a term which send shivers through people's hearts, was hijacked by the Islamists, for it means struggle, primarily internal struggle always for towards good, never for evil!

We then moved the discussion to a more practical/philosophical area. How do we define extremism. The counter terrorism strategy in the UK is the "4 Ps": pursue, prepare, protect and prevent, the last one being the most difficult. There is no definition for what defines extremism. Usama unpicked the terms "radical" and "extreme". For him personally, the word radical has positive connotation, whereas for the word extreme the connotation is negative. In the Qu'ran and the Hadith there is a warning that extremism will destroy. In the Arab language the word has two meanings, both of them indicating out of balance due to excess. The government seems to accept the difference between the meaning of the words radical and extreme, but confusingly talk about radicalisation leading to extremism.

From the psycho-spiritual perspective of ISIS, Usama pointed out that good and evil exist within us and ISIS is a social phenomenon comparable to Nazism in the early 20th century. The deeply rooted human tribal instinct is present in this situation. To buy into this narrative will only increase the difficulties. ISIS must be destroyed but when that happens in the hopefully not too distant a future, many of the people who have joined ISIS will return to their countries and families. He advises us to be compassionate and rather than ostracise them, we should find a way to work towards healing the wounds that have been created. It is, he acknowledges, a big ask, to remain loving in the face of evil and that, he says, is the only way of healing the profound wounds created by ISIS. The website for the Quilliam Foundation is <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org>.



August

This month we welcomed **Gary Lachman**, an old friend of the London Group who this evening talked about his recently published book, *The Secret Teachers of the Western World*. Gary is the author of some 19 books and is a professor in the evolution of consciousness at the California Institute of Integral Studies. *The Secret Teachers of the Western World* is a historical account of what is variously called as Inner Traditions,

Esotericism, Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism, etc. It is an understanding of the world and our place in it with insights achieved through inner journey. In his book, Gary used a fascinating lens through which to examine this historical account, and that is the work of two thinkers, Jean Gebser and Iain McGilchrist, both of whom have looked at structures of human consciousness and how they influence perspective and understanding.

Gebser argues that human consciousness has evolved throughout history and he identifies the emergence of structures which he called archaic, magical, mythic and mental. Iain McGilchrist's approach is based on the different kinds of attention given to the world by the left and right hemispheres of the brain, the left being analytical and detail oriented whereas the right is whole oriented, participatory and integrating. These lenses enabled Gary to explain that prior to the 17th C the world was seen and understood through a right brain perspective, the power of myths, rituals and divination. With the advent of the Reformation and the Enlightenment, which brought about the emergence of the scientific, evidence-based examination of reality, the esoteric traditions were forced underground. It was, Gary argued, a left brain "coup d'état" which invalidated the right brain thinking and knowledge of the esoteric traditions.

The ancient, right brain, esoteric traditions have their roots in the Axial Age around the globe, with the teachings of the Buddha, Plato, Confucius, Zoroaster, Lao Tse, the Hebrew Prophets etc. Around the same time, a flicker of left brain thinking emerged in Greece when a different type of more logical curiosity appeared, requiring answers about the world in which we live. Rational explanations rather than myths were sought and Plato's disciple Aristotle was the first to consider this new perspective. Left brain, analytical, scientific enquiry, so prevalent in Western thinking, has evolved from there.

An important historical event which would determine the survival of the right brain thinking was the persecution of Pagans and their teachings in early Christendom which caused many to flee to Alexandria in Egypt. As a consequence, Alexandria became the cradle of the Western Esoteric tradition adopting two powerful symbols: its library and its lighthouse. The mystery schools which carried the tradition thrived, and their teachings then spread, often covertly, to the rest of the Western World.

Time became a limiting factor in the presentation and we heard only briefly about two well-known thinkers who incorporated this esoteric thinking in their work, Isaac Newton (who wrote more about spirituality than about physics) and Dante Alighieri, author of the Divine Comedy, where the move from hell to heaven, as well as the ostensible, is also a description of an inner journey. There was no question for me that I needed to get the book to read about others!

Gary concluded by voicing the possibility that the 1960s revolution may have been a compensating movement in an effort towards the emergence of this repressed tradition, an urge towards a more embracing, right brain way of seeing the world, a challenge to the left brain impulse which has led humanity towards so many of its current problems not least seeing ourselves as exploiters rather than part of nature.

Gary's website is <https://garylachman.co.uk>. See review of Gary's book below.

SYDNEY GROUP – JEAN INGMAN

Talk by Sandy Yang, May 28th 2016

Science and Spirituality in Tao

(Tao De Jin Chapter 25)

Before the Sky and Earth existed there was chaos. Silent, Isolated, Independent without changing Revolving without fail. Worthy to be the Mother of All Things. I do not know its name and called it as Tao

Sandy began her talk with a description of Tao, Tao is the Way. Lao Zhi around BC 571. Sandy showed how the signs for Tao had changed over the years.

She continued with the Chinese Ancient Mythology of how Pangu opened the sky and created the world showing how periods of 10,800 years were important. Also how 108 is important, the Buddhist Japa Marla beads are 108.

The history of China predated written history with the Old Stone era, the Middle Stone Era, and New stone Era, then came the Three Sovereigns, Fu Xi 3100 BC who started the Civilization, Shen Long associated with medicine and farming and Huang Di 2698 BC, The way of living.

Discussion followed with the Universe manifest principle and the River Picture and how the numbers all relate to each other, totaling 55 and the differences being 5. The even numbers are Yin and the odd Yang. The River Picture was shown as a spiral showing the yin/yang sign as we know it.

Another depiction was the Holy Turtle, Luo book with a sum of 15 and 10 disappearing. The Universe Manifest principle was changed. This was followed by the I Ching, Book of Changes and 64 possibilities and how Toa evolved, Li, no form, intangible, Nirvana. Chi, with form, intangible. Xiang, with form tangible.

Qi is very important for "who we are". Chi is different for everyone and is the basis of all emotions. The five elements relate to different colours, morals and organs.

Sandy concluded by talking about Confucius, how to get in touch with one's inside, to help society for the better.

Altogether a humbling reminder that the Eastern Civilisations predate those of the West by many thousands of years.

GRAMPIAN GROUP – NICOLA MILLER

April 2016

Mistletoe therapy: Its role in resilience and wellbeing



On April 23rd, our speaker was **Dr Stefan Geider**, a peer-reviewed author responsible for developing mistletoe therapy locally and throughout the UK as part of an integrated approach to cancer care. Dr Geider is a medical graduate with a doctorate from the University of Witten-Herdecke, Germany. He is trained in both traditional (Western) and anthroposophic medicine. For the last 20 years he has been a GP principal at Camphill Medical Practice NHS, Aberdeen where his interest, initially, focused on learning disabilities, including autism, mental health, chronic conditions (including rehabilitation) and cancer care. A few years ago he returned to his interest in mistletoe therapy, first stimulated as a medical student when he had time to talk to patients and listen to their experiences in relation to cancer.

Before talking further about mistletoe therapy, Dr Geider gave a brief overview of the anthroposophic approach which he described as an extended and holistic approach rather than a separate or alternative method; treatments include counselling, eurythmy, therapeutic massage, therapeutic speech, nutritional advice and lifestyle discussion and advice. We learnt that this extended, holistic approach is more well-developed on the continent. In a city the size of Aberdeen, for example, there would be 3 anthroposophic practices.

Mistletoe therapy is the most frequently prescribed complementary therapy for cancer worldwide. It is prescribed by qualified doctors but, when compared with the continent, there are very few qualified practitioners in the UK. There are about 1,000 varieties of mistletoe but the variety used in treatment is the European mistletoe (*Viscum album*). It is a semi-parasite that has as its host trees such as apple, oak, ash, birch, and pine.

Pharmaceutically prepared extracts sold under branded names e.g. Iscador and Abnoba *Viscum Fraxini*, contain about 2000 substances. Although the main chemicals are lectins, which are immune stimulants, and viscotoxins, which have anti-cancer properties, it is the combination of all the substances—the whole extract—that seems to be important. Mistletoe therapy can be given in a number of ways including under the skin (subcutaneous injection), via intravenous infusion, by injection into the tumour, or as drops by mouth. In treating cancer patients, doctors aim to eliminate tumour cells altogether. Mainstream treatment options include surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, and hormone treatment. Mistletoe therapy is thought to activate the body's own defence mechanisms and to support the patient as a whole by: improving the quality of life (wellbeing, pain, fatigue, sleep, ability to cope, resilience, mood, and general outlook on life); improving tolerance to toxic therapies such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy; improving patients' potential for recovery through possible improved responses to other treatments and, by authentically involving individual patients in their own treatment, reducing their fear and increasing their ability to live in the present.

In 2014, Shakeel, Trinidad, Geider and Ah-See published a peer-reviewed paper describing the case of a patient with laryngeal cancer who made a full recovery following mistletoe therapy, despite failing to respond to surgery (laryngectomy), radiotherapy and chemotherapy¹. Palliative care



was thought to be the only treatment option but, following mistletoe therapy, this patient made a full recovery and, after five years' follow-up and no signs of recurrence, he was discharged from the clinic.

According to Dr Geider, the case is a good example of conventional and extended approaches working together in his practice. Mistletoe therapy is controversial in mainstream medicine and when asked what single measure would assist him in his efforts to take this work forward, Dr Geider replied that he would like to interest and work in collaboration with cancer specialists and, through well-designed scientific studies, try to identify which factors underlie successful responses to treatment. He finished by emphasising that the use of mistletoe therapy is an extension of mainstream treatment approaches and not an alternative treatment. This enlightening talk was followed by a number of questions relating to immune system suppression, chronic illness and inflammation, and the overuse of antibiotics. For anyone interested in finding out more about mistletoe therapy, please visit www.mistletoetherapy.org.uk

1. Shakeel, M., Trinidade, A., Geider, S., Ah-See, K.W. The case for mistletoe in the treatment of laryngeal cancer, *The Journal of Laryngology & Otology* (2014), 128, 302-306

June 2016

The Importance of being Earnest

Our speaker in June (to an audience of twenty) was **Maria Thornton**, a qualified horsemanship instructor. Maria has a particular interest in human/equine behaviour dynamics or 'horse whispering' and, for a number of years, has taught children (and some adults) every day after school. Her interest in the interactions between horses, and between horses and their riders, began when her daughter acquired a pony who needed to be worked with in a different way.

The title of her talk "The importance of being earnest" was taken from Oscar Wilde's classic play of (almost) the same name. This play is a favourite of Maria's for a number of reasons: first, it illustrates the importance of really trying—an important life skill, and second, a lot of time is devoted to interactions between characters doing things and behaving in ways that they *think* are appropriate but that, instead, are ways that are often incongruent with their emotional and physical state. The question Maria asks is "How can we be honest so that how we feel is congruent with how we behave (physically and emotionally) and, at the same time, take responsibility for our self and, possibly, a third party? To illustrate her underlying motivations, Maria told two stories which highlight a) the importance of reward, as it motivates individuals to do more and b) the importance of "(listening) beyond the surface" to understand the person's real value, or "what lies behind their eyes." She discussed how we live in a world where we don't want to show our real self; how people are very good at hiding how they really feel.

Maria has always liked horses and people and has sought to understand them. However, when she started to work with both horses and their riders she began to notice that horses (sentient creatures, not machines) are like barometers where people are concerned. She sees a lot of people dealing with trauma, fear, and anxiety who often won't tell you where they're coming from because they're scared; they put their anxieties in a box and hope that if they put enough "credit in the bank" they will go away. But, in order to move forward, these anxieties need to be addressed.

A lot of children and adults hide things that horses can pick up on directly. Unlike people, horses can't hide how they feel - they are present with

you. And because they are 'barometers' they can't hide how their rider feels. A child may say he or she is "fine" but Maria, on noticing signs of stress in the horse, knows that they are clearly not "fine" because the horse demonstrates fear/isolating behaviour when the child's heart and posture are in conflict. Her role involves first helping the individual realise that there is a problem—to recognise and acknowledge their feelings and understand that they can't just be put in a box. And then, instead of hiding their fears she helps them to learn how to relax while paying attention to how they breathe, their posture and their speech register (high or low).

Smiling "with teeth" also helps because it helps unlock a clenched jaw. She will ask the individual to carry out activities within their comfort zone while breathing properly. The horse will "hang back" if the rider's behaviour is incongruent, and will want to leave because they don't feel safe. However, they can handle "honest fear" and they "like to be in a space where things are happening." Maria doesn't have to ask where the fear is coming from. When the fear is eventually addressed it changes the dynamics of the pony, and when the pony is moving better this tells Maria that the rider is more confident and ready to do more. She aims to help individuals find out who they are, take responsibility for who they are, and not be afraid of who they are.

Maria spoke freely, without notes, and from the heart. Her talk was greatly enjoyed by all present, many of whom continued the discussion into the car park! At her request, and following a brief talk by Michelle Cole, donations from this evening's talk (in lieu of expenses) went to Crisis Response International, a worldwide charity that sets out to train people how to respond in emergencies, from natural disasters to humanitarian crises. Since 2000, 10,000 responders have been trained worldwide but only six from the UK. Her talk focused on the needs of those in refugee camps. To find out more, please visit www.criout.org/

LAMPETER AND WEST WALES GROUP – ERIC FRANKLIN

The Lampeter and West Wales Local Group is running out of local lecturers, and the convenor has no time to write and illustrate the lectures that are in his own head. The result is a narrower range of events under the SMN banner here recently, but no lack of interest or quality. **Marye Wyvill**, a yoga teacher of many years, following injury to her hand and wrist, achieved recovery using the 'Bones for Life' exercises of Ruthy Alon, which, I understand, developed from the Feldenkrais techniques. I am not expert in such matters, but took part in the first series of Marye's classes, here in Lampeter, and it is those classes which formed the main events in recent months. They were good fun, and certainly beneficial as therapy, but different from the series of lectures we have convened hitherto. After an approximately-monthly series of four classes, each concentrating on a different part of the body and/or a different motor function, Marye is now planning a series, also on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David campus, of classes relating to other physical functions.

The one other recent event, part talk, part discussion, was led by **Iain Cameron Watson**, whose father was (Iain says) an over-enthusiastic follower of Freud. Zeal in parents can be counterproductive, amounting, in my own case, to the religious oppression of a sensitive psyche, the damage requiring decades of self-healing and self-development. Iain, too, has spent already many years seeking spiritual truth, and conceived his event 'The Last Hour of Life' after a recent bereavement in his family. He pressed no dogmatic opinions, but put questions his own experience had prompted to an audience of some twenty people. Later, using handouts on which we noted our responses, we discussed our written answers.

To discuss dying is beginning to be acceptable, rigorous science and what we might call the semi-science of intelligently-aware experience providing evidence that our Being may be independent of the physical body, and more permanent. It was clear from the discussion that most of those present believed in an inner, ongoing livingness, though whether we felt we had rigorous proof would be a further question. It is rational to think that if Being is essentially extra-physical there cannot be direct evidence within the physical world. Indeed, the cessation of function in the physical body is evidence, though not conclusive, not that death has ended the livingness of a Being but that livingness itself is not and never was a feature of the physical body. Both logically and empirically we have to say that strong direct evidence of continuing life can never appear in the physical world. Weak evidence of survival of being after physical dying is precisely the fact that the physical body's activity, observed using the physical body's senses (the sole ground of what we call science) has ceased. Life has always been and will remain beyond scientific research's grasp unless we can develop a science of an entirely separable and different realm. Being-in-this-other-realm seems to be the Observer, but cannot itself be 'objectively' observed, only experienced. The rigorous full argument cannot be given here, of course, but I state it more fully, and perhaps less poorly, in my contribution to Dr Maureen Lockhart's book

'The Subtle Energy Body', arrogantly subtitled 'The Complete Guide' not by the authors but without their permission by its publishers.

Some in Iain's audience asked whether his subject was the end of all human life on our planet, but he explained that it was the last hour of each individual life, and our anticipation of our own death, that concerned him. Iain himself has followed a path for some 30 years, seeking a meaning and purpose that would ease inner turmoil. He reminded us that there are incomprehensible inconsistencies in society's priorities. Many are hungry, yet humans pay for rockets to the moon. Why? Why is there not the same interest in what really matters as there is in a football match? He quoted the book 'Practical Work on Self' by E J Gold, then asked for two minutes of group silence, seeking the 'en rapport' state evinced by group meditators, before continuing.

The ills of society, Iain said, were not out there in the political world but within us. A wrongdoer is seen as if not one of us, but the proclivity is within each of us. Focusing on death and dying is more needed than anything else, not least to improve life, and to bring to reality the universal force of love. Iain handed out his questions, and various expectations or hopes were expressed - that dying should be pain-free, for example. Regrets about poor actions during life would now be a cause of a final sorrow. The events should have been corrected at the time. Many responses seemed not to evince belief in survival. Few looked forward, yet, paradoxically, all showed a belief that the period being entered - 'death' - was one of continued consciousness. Iain spoke of his own wish to live always as if it were already that moment when there is no further time left to us. The great question is whether dying is an ending or a transition, and the great objective is to use the present appropriately. Iain read again a quotation from Montaigne used in his introduction, and a short further quotation from E J Gold. We should think of our last hour of life as a great ballet, for which a lifetime of practice has been necessary. Iain's undogmatic conclusion regarding his topic, shared by many 'gurus', is that we should 'Draw no conclusions'.

CAMBRIDGE GROUP – RICHARD MICHELL

Sarah Keaton, who recently joined the Network, spoke of her experience of enlightenment and how it had changed her life. She gave the impression of undergoing a spontaneous and rather less dramatic version of an NDE. In particular, it led to her feeling an enhanced empathy for the needs of others, and she extended her social engagement accordingly. We went on to explore ideas about consciousness in an untrammelled fashion that is the hallmark of the Network. One member pointed out how far our openness to such explorations went beyond the straightjacket of what was considered acceptable in the academic world of science. This makes us aware of the pioneering role played by the Network, while remaining alert to the dominance of the limiting beliefs pervading our contemporary culture. We will be pursuing this latter aspect next time, when Hazel Guest will be considering the power of mental imagery.

MEMBERS' ARTICLES

AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Available from the Editor or through links, dl@scimednet.org

SCIENCE

Cancer as a Mitochondrial Metabolic Disease

Thomas Seyfried (11 pp. from *Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology*)

A seminal article: "In contrast to the somatic mutation theory, emerging evidence suggests that cancer is a mitochondrial metabolic disease, according to the original theory of Otto Warburg." (for which he was awarded a Nobel Prize).

Our In-formed and Holographic Universe: an emerging new vision of reality – and how it affects all of us

Dr Jude Currivan (5 pp)

MEDICINE

Manifesto of the New Paradigm in Medicine

Pier Mario Biava and Ervin Laszlo (20 pp)

Recent discoveries in the fields of biophysics, genetics, epigenetics, neuroscience and psychosomatics describe the universe and life as highly coherent systems where in-formation is a key factor and has a fundamental role in their origin. In this vision, living systems are cognitive networks in a dynamic relationship with everything around them. Health in this context has to be considered a dynamic balance in a subject in which the information moves on in a correct way.

PHILOSOPHY/SPIRITUALITY

A Mystic's Guide to Conscious Ageing

Rev John Robinson (5 pp)

The Convergence of Science and Spirituality

Dr Edi Bilimoria (2 pp)

Panosophy

Paul Hague (1 p summary)

Review of Penny Sartori's 'What is a Near-Death Experience'?

Bob Charman (3 pp)

The Implications of Near-death experiences and NDE research for Christians and Christian Theology

Paul Badham (10 pp., paper from Winchester conference)

PSYCHOLOGY

Adult Life Stage and Crisis as Predictors of Curiosity and Authenticity: Testing inferences from Erikson's lifespan theory

Oliver C. Robinson, James D. Demetre, and Jordan A. Litman (6 pp., from *International Journal of Behavioural Development*)

GENERAL

The Dignity of Difference

Arun Maira (9 pp, *International Futures Forum*)

Reflects on our global challenges from an Indian viewpoint.

Dreaming beyond Capitalism

Dieter Duham (Tamera, 9 pp)

Tamera – a Source of Hope and Healing for Ourselves and our World?

A personal view by Sue Bayliss, holistic psychotherapist (6 pp).

ONLINE ARTICLES BY ANTHONY JUDGE

Radical Innovators Beware – in the arts, sciences and philosophy. Terrifying implications of radical new deradicalisation initiative in France

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/deradic.php>

**Existential Challenge of Detecting Today's Big Lie
Mysterious black hole conditioning global civilization?**

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/biglie.php>

**Disastrous Floods as Indicators of Systemic Risk Neglect
Implications for authoritative response to future surprises**

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/floods.php>

**Destabilizing Multipolar Society through Binary Decision-making
Alternatives to "2-stroke democracy" suggested by 4-sided ball games**

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/ballgame.php>

**Criteria Justifying Recounting or Revoting in Democracy
Highlighted by the case of the Brexit referendum**

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/revote.php>

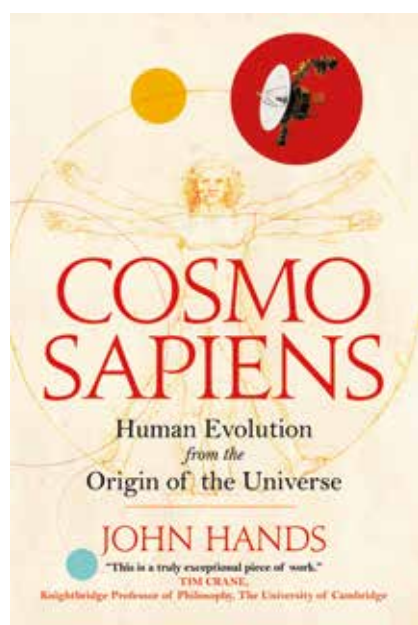
**Cultivating the Myth of Human Equality
Ignoring complicity in the contradictions thereby engendered**

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/inequal.php>

book reviews

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science-philosophy of science



Ultimate Questions

David Lorimer

COSMOSAPIENS

John Hands

Duckworth, 2015, 704 pp., £30, h/b – ISBN 978-0-715-649558

10 years in the making, this *tour de force* is a critical examination of scientific theories and evidence – systematic observation or experiment – about the origin and evolution of matter, life, consciousness and humankind. As such, it could scarcely be more ambitious, but the result is a triumph of detailed conceptual analysis covering the fields of fundamental cosmology, physics, biology and the evolution of philosophical and religious ideas. The author states his viewpoint at the beginning of the book by saying that he was born and educated a Catholic, became an atheist and is now an agnostic with no prior beliefs in theism, deism or materialism; he maintains an impartial stance even if he is accused of not doing so. In the course of his research, he consulted and received detailed feedback from over 60 experts. His writing is clear, careful, painstaking

and critical. Throughout the book, he gives his own definitions of key terms as and when they come up in the narrative, and there is also a glossary of terms at the end.

The four parts examine scientific explanations for the emergence and evolution of matter and energy, then emergence and evolution of life, the emergence and evolution of humans, and finally some systematic conclusions, as well as observations about the limitations of science. It becomes clear in the course of discussing various fields that there are patterns of thought that have ossified into preconceptions that are taken for granted and rarely questioned by those inside the field. Beginning with a survey of origin myths, the author moves on to the cosmology of the Big Bang before setting out what this orthodox theory fails to explain, which is then elaborated in the following chapter. He discusses a variety of other cosmological conjectures before considering more generally the problems facing cosmology as an explanatory means in terms of practical difficulties, data interpretation, inadequate theory and intrinsic limitations of science. He then explores the reasonableness of cosmological conjectures and tests to which they can be subjected as well as approaches involving fine tuning and multiverses. Moving on, he looks at the evolution of matter on a large scale, then on a small-scale, and overall patterns that apply. In his detailed conclusions to this section – set out in 23 numbered paragraphs – he observes that some people conflate mathematical with scientific proof and, on the basis of his analysis, does not think that the standard Big Bang model meets science's test for a robust theory. Indeed, the whole question of origins may in fact be beyond science to ascertain with any certainty due to the fact that the central claims are untestable.

Part Two addresses the emergence and evolution of life with the same thoroughgoing analysis of theories and evidence. In considering the history of biology and the development of science's explanation of life, he discusses vitalism and orthodox reactions to it, including more modern formulations involving David Bohm and

Rupert Sheldrake. The author proceeds to lay out the claimed characteristics of life, arriving at a definition that rejects the reductionist argument that there is no distinction between what is alive and what is not alive; for him, the difference is qualitative and analogous to a phase change. The following chapters explore the emergence of life in terms of evidence and hypotheses, as well as the development of scientific ideas about biological evolution, then the evidence for these ideas in terms of fossils, analyses of living species, the behaviour of the species and the human lineage. The author summarises current orthodox thinking about causes of biological evolution, while setting out specific elements that it cannot explain before exploring nearly twenty complementary and competing hypotheses with respect to complexification, collaboration and the evolution of consciousness. In the course of this part, he brings in the thinking of Prince Kropotkin on cooperation and mutual aid, which forms an important element in his overall conclusions.

The impossibility of divorcing ideas from beliefs, whether in God or in materialism, comes up again in this section, exacerbated by the fact that evidence is scarce and open to different interpretations. In his conclusions to this biological section, he reflects on reactions by specialists to drafts that he sent, which he groups into five types: peremptorily dismissive, politely dismissive, 'you don't know the facts', 'you appear to know the facts but you don't understand them', 'Neo-Darwinism is compatible with all the evidence and all the different hypotheses.' It is very clear that the author does know the facts, but he also considers their overall context and embedded assumptions, which those in the field frequently fail to do. This makes for uncomfortable reading and goes a long way to explaining the reactions above. Again, his conclusions are set out in 53 numbered paragraphs, some with subsections, from which he draws four qualitative laws of biological evolution: 'competition and rapid environmental change cause the extinction of species; collaboration causes the evolution of species; living things evolved by progressive complexification and centration along fusing and diverging

lineages that lead to stasis in all but one lineage; a rise in consciousness correlates with increasing collaboration, complexification and centration.

Part Three deals with the emergence and evolution of humans with a special emphasis on the development of reflective consciousness. The author considers various models and explanatory hypotheses before looking in more detail and the evolution of human thinking from primeval to philosophical to scientific. He observes that Indian sages emphasise the underlying unity of reality, and he makes an important distinction, illustrated in a chart (p. 505), between the development of insight and reasoning, corresponding broadly to the right and left hemispheres of Iain McGilchrist's model, incidentally not mentioned here. Under insight we have psychological, ethical, mystical, mathematical, scientific and artistic, while under reasoning there is natural philosophy, metaphysics, logic, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. Ethical thinking goes beyond competition and instinct by insisting that we can only achieve by acting unselfishly: 'at root it is a prescription for cooperation not competition in order to achieve progress for humanity.'

The chapter on scientific thinking describes the scientific method and the emergence of the three branches of physical, life and medical sciences (see chart on p. 516), then of psychology in the late 19th century. The rise of scientific specialism is accompanied by a corresponding reductionist methodology, but more recently we see the emergence of a convergent trend, especially in physics with its quest for a theory of everything (of course, this should include consciousness....). The conclusions to the section are set out in 35 paragraphs and make the central point, as for the emergence of life, that reflective consciousness is a change of kind, not merely of degree. The author then brings together the strands of his thinking - which has parallels with that of Elisabet Sahtouris (not mentioned) - that convergence and complexification also correspond to increased cooperation and collaboration, as Kropotkin pointed out over 100 years ago. Globalisation and communications, as well as the establishment of global institutions, have exhibited this trend, particularly since the end of the Second World War. It represents, despite the current prominence given to terrorist attacks, a gradual overcoming of competition, aggression, hierarchism and divergence by cooperation, altruism, complexity and convergence, as thinkers like Teilhard de Chardin envisioned some 80 years ago.

The final part on a cosmic process discusses the limitations within the domain of science in terms of observation and measurement, data,

subjectivity, method, theory and defective science; then limitations of the domain of science based on subjective experiences, social concepts and values, untestable ideas and metaphysical questions. Scientific theories are necessarily underpinned by philosophical assumptions, which in turn influence the selection and interpretation of data. As William James and Prince de Broglie also observed, such assumptions should be reviewed, modified or abandoned in the light of conflicting evidence. In particular, the reductionist approach is limited in its explanatory power for complex, open, interactive and emergent systems (p. 566). For orthodox readers, the author's proposal that we need to postulate a new form of energy - psychic energy associated with mind - will be a step too far, but there is good evidence for such effects that are frequently discussed in this Review. The author questions and indeed demonstrates the limitations of current scientific thinking, but also highlights the limitation of the human mind, which can be inferred from reports of mystical experience where subjects are immersed in rather than separated from reality. The author's final conclusions are set out in a further 39 paragraphs, at the end of which he arrives at his short answer to question of what and who we are: 'the unfinished product of an accelerating cosmic evolutionary process characterised by collaboration, complexity and convergence, and the self reflective agents of our future evolution.' At the end of this dense and closely argued treatise, one can only agree with Tim Crane, Knightsbridge professor of philosophy at Cambridge, that 'this is a truly exceptional piece of work.'

Fishy Evidence for the Origins of Consciousness

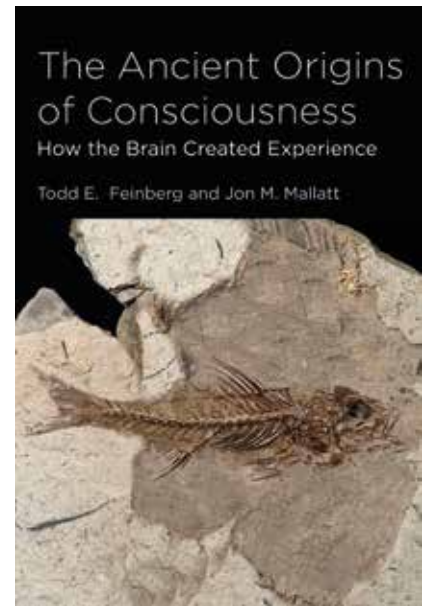
Martin Lockley

THE ANCIENT ORIGINS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: HOW THE BRAIN CREATED EXPERIENCE

Todd E. Feinberg and Jon M. Mallat

MIT Press, 2016, \$35.00 h/b., £24.95, ISBN 978 0262 034333

Ancient Origins fills a "gap" but not philosopher Joseph Levine's still-intractable, mysterious gap "between the physical properties of the brain... and the subjective experiences that the brain thereby creates" (also referred to as the "hard problem" of consciousness). Personally I question, but cannot convincingly refute, the assumption that the physical brain creates consciousness, rather than, say, channeling, receiving or embodying all manner of non-sensory, sensory as well as supersensory "information." No matter! Most SMN readers will also be familiar with another problem:



the vague and variable definitions of consciousness, which most researchers feely admit is ever-elusive. Feinberg, a professor of psychiatry and neurology and Mallat, a professor of biology and medical sciences at least tell us that this book is not about "higher" reflective "self-consciousness" but rather aims to explore "sensory" or "primary consciousness," or more elaborately "neuroontologically subjective features of consciousness" (NSFC) comprising qualia, referral, mental unity, (isometric unity), and mental causation. They propose to trace the origin of the hard problem back to the origin of sensory consciousness in order to resolve "the neurobiological gap between subjective experience and the brain" with a theory of "neurobiological naturalism" derived, with some modification, from Searle's "biological naturalism." [At the risk of simplification this is the brain-centric view that consciousness is an epiphenomenon of brain activity. I also see a problem in assuming, or assuming to understand, subjectivity in remote-from-human-experience, and sometimes-extinct species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds mammals etc., For example the sensory faculties of such sentient creatures may not produce mental images that are experienced subjectively. We humans can sleep walk, or dream, or even drive a few miles, while responding to sensory input, but not be "consciously" aware of any subjective experience!]

Chapters 2 through 6 launch into what is essentially a biological and paleontological text dealing with the physical (morphological) evolution of the nervous system (brain), with particular emphasis on origins at the time of the popular and much-debated Cambrian explosion some 520 million years ago. At this time small animals developed nervous systems, eyes and mobility, all integrated and complimentary faculties described as "extreme sensory and cognitive enhancement."

[Again, one asks, does “cognitive” follow from sensory?] The details of these developments are copiously and conscientiously illustrated, and tied to various interpretations of their significance, including, I am glad, to say a “holistic” appreciation that senses interact to create a unity of perception of the type referred to as mental unity or isomorphism: (e.g., you have two eyes, but experience one visual image, and your two ears hear one sound). Evidence for the development of sensory organs is well-known from the Cambrian, and later, fossil records, beginning when the first inch-long, proto-fish, with eyes and head, began to look like a vertebrate. So it seems, Feinberg and Mallat consider them as possible “candidates for the first conscious organisms on earth” but admit that other researchers consider that conscious species arose later with birds and mammals.

Again, without refuting their thesis, I am a little vague on the meaning of “conscious.” Presumably this refers to previously-mentioned sensory or primary consciousness. Thus, as I understand it neuronal complexity can be considered a potential “marker” (their word) for consciousness, and so equated with said complexity. So again, the thesis is that the brain creates and evolves consciousness, and that brain size is a proxy for measuring consciousness. [What then do we make of cultures, and childhood development stages, that do not see the brain, or brain alone, as the seat of consciousness? It seems, in our desire to understand this “problem,” we cannot escape the assumption that consciousness has an “origin,” source or “seat.”]

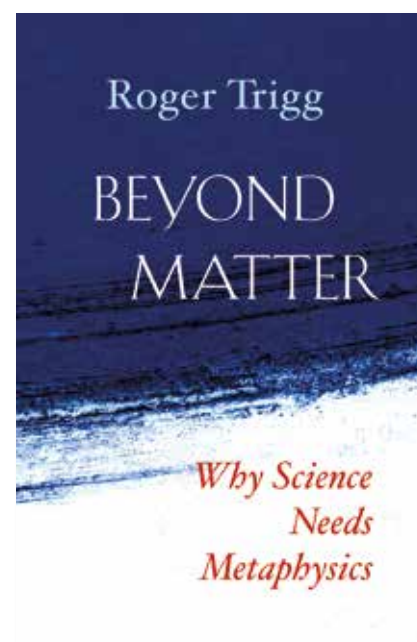
I admit to being bewildered by the equating of “conscious” with “consciousness” and diverse states and faculties (perception, recognition, memory and arousal) assumed or considered for animals as diverse as invertebrates, fish and mammals. Are conscious origins the same as origins of consciousness (or even knowable)? Few workers agree: some claim consciousness originated with fish (560-520 million years ago) others say it arose with mammals (220 my) and or birds (165 my) and the cerebral cortex, allowing the term cerebral consciousness, and such bewilderingly anthropomorphic concepts as “high computational needs of advancing consciousness” used in association with rather stale Darwinian “race for survival” terminology. [Methinks they protest too much on behalf of consciousness].

Chapter 7 on “sentience” defines “affect as a conscious experience” and launches into a list of workers who again trace said “origin of affective consciousness” as far back as fish (560 my) or merely back to the origin

of *H. sapiens* (200,000 y). Although claiming “not to overwhelm the reader with detail,” I was overwhelmed to the point of being underwhelmed (4 tables in Chapter 8 take up 10 pages). *Mea culpa*. Perhaps a failing on my part, but I find more and more data makes less and less sense.

I’m all for crediting invertebrates, fish, amphibians *etcetera* with remarkable sensory faculties which look to us like signs of impressive intelligence (some might use the ill-defined term “instinct”). But to categorise the perceptions of myriad non-human species on a scale of consciousness, affect, experience or sentience, (complexly and inconsistently defined and understood by different researchers), seems a tall order. Having said that it is interesting to ponder the extent to which this volume parallels our changing awareness, dare I say consciousness, of animals. As we humans have become “civilised,” our relationship with animals has changed (see review of *Troublesome Inheritance*), and we speak in human-centric language of the “humane” treatment of animals. The animal rights movement (Network 119), and our concern for the ecological environment are just two manifestations of our shift in consciousness.

In this regard Jonathan Balcombe’s new book *What a Fish Knows* is an interesting exposition on fish sentience, perception or “knowledge” dealing, among other things, with the essentially moral question of whether they feel pain, for example by demonstrating nociception (response to noxious stimulus). Feinberg and Mallet deal with this topic in some detail noting that “the question of fish pain is heavily debated.” The point is that even if one is skeptical about categorising fish consciousness it is useful to have studies that trace the evolution of the nervous system back for a half billion years, if only because such expositions demonstrate our broader interest in the evolution of animal sentience, which in turn reflects our changing relationship with the animal kingdom. If, as some like to say, humans are the/a self-conscious organ of the biosphere, rather than a “separate” self-conscious, or exceptional species, then knowing ourselves, as far as it is possible, biologically and psychologically, involves knowing and delving into the biosphere at the psychic level of “knowing” and consciousness. I will let readers decide what “knowledge” about consciousness and experience arises from *Ancient Origins*, and only add that the exploration itself is evidence of the former we-are-part-of-the-biosphere view.



Science, Naturalism and Post-Modernism

John Maxwell Kerr, SOSC.

BEYOND MATTER: WHY SCIENCE NEEDS METAPHYSICS

Roger Trigg

Templeton Press, 2015. 162 pp. \$19.70 h/b. ISBN 978-1-59947-495-3.

Here is Roger Trigg at his most incisive and succinct as he returns to his examination of where the limits of the modern scientific enterprise might legitimately lie. He makes a clear and persuasive case for the validity of explanations in metaphysics, ethics, and theology, against both the reductive stance we have inherited (through various permutations) from positivism and the abnegation of universal truth claims of post-modernism.

Trigg neatly and concisely evaluates methodological naturalism (a metaphysical position not known to be such by the many working scientists who espouse it) and philosophical naturalism, with its wider claims about the nature of what can exist. Trigg cites one definition of ‘naturalism’ as asserting that all that is consists solely of the physical, spatio-temporal world, with its corollary that such a world is accessible to science. That this is hardly a scientific claim is evident. However, without the validity of the metaphysical ground assuming the existence of an objective reality, science would simply be a game of which it might be said that, for those who like that sort of thing, that is the sort of thing they like.

The examples he deploys suggest that naïve naturalist claims are not easily substantiated in the face of quantum realities and multi-universe speculations. His case requires re-examination of the belief one has heard

so often, that science is what there is any evidence to suppose is the way the world is, not what it would be nice to suppose about the way the world is. The assertion that there really is an infinite number of universes, each transcending any possibility of being known by humans, has struck practising cosmologists (even those who have never heard of William of Ockham) as rather profligate with universes, verging on mere speculation. Most working scientists would distinguish between speculation and science, without the benefit of Trigg's arguments and well-chosen examples, though it would be to their very great advantage to have read "Beyond Matter."

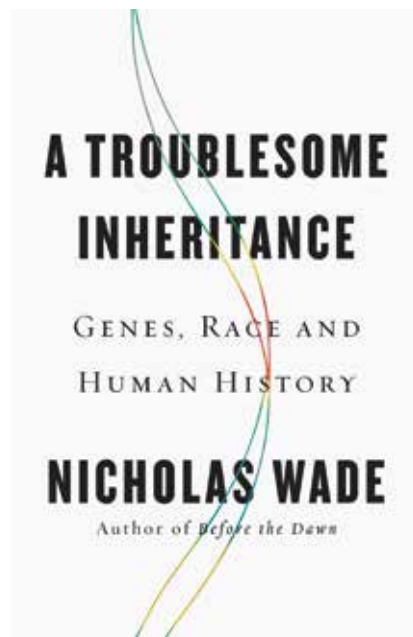
His analysis rather neatly (but again, fairly) undermines the post-modernism project (derived originally from architecture, and perhaps too-widely extrapolated) that there are many meanings, not that one universal relationship between human knowledge and "the universe" traditionally claimed by science.

Why would anyone believe that science is omniscient as an explanatory method? Why would anyone claim (with the Oxford physical chemist, Peter Atkins) that, if science has not objectively explained everything quite just yet, it can and will undoubtedly do so, at least in principle. Could such a claim be, in any sense, scientific? Philosophers of science will appreciate that the "at least in principle" caveat goes back to Carnap's qualification of the Vienna Circle's criterion for meaningfulness. Trigg valuably supplies an outline of the history of his opponents' positions: this background illuminates his examples. For instance, Eugene Wigner's observation about "the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics (the free creation of the human mind) in the natural sciences"... "something bordering on the mysterious," has never quite persuaded this reviewer of Max Tegmark's assertion that "all mathematical possibilities are actual" in an infinite multiverse. Tegmark's is notably a classically metaphysical position, though he deny it.

The weight of many of the arguments in senior common rooms and laboratories against science's reliance on metaphysical assertions is usually not the more grandly philosophical one that science has somehow eliminated the need for metaphysics and all other forms of explanation. The banal claim is that "science works": it has delivered the goods and ever more shall do so. Science progresses (the evidence is all around us) by self-correction of models and hypotheses in the light of empirical data. Philosophy does not bring about change in the world; it leaves things as they are. Scientific progress rests on increasingly more comprehensive explanations and remarkable predictions. In effect, the assumption

is that metaphysical explanation has been eliminated by the inductive idea of always advancing progress derived from the rapidity and effectiveness of the "the human appliance of science" over the last two centuries.

The brief overview Trigg affords us in "Beyond Matter" (its 162 pages includes notes and an index) is written in the sort of prose one longs to meet in any book one wants to put into the hands of graduate students in the sciences. Such readers may not notice, nor be dismayed by, the few but stunning lapses in proof-reading confronting one, for example on page 27, where one reads, "Physics in the nineteenth century bares (*sic*) little relation to contemporary physics." No doubt that is so, but it distracts from the force of an otherwise well-developed, sustained, and comprehensive argument.



The Race for a Less-troubled Civilisation

Martin Lockley

A TROUBLESOME INHERITANCE: GENES, RACE AND HUMAN HISTORY,

Nicholas Wade

Penguin, 2014/2015, 288 pp., \$17, p/b - ISBN 978-0-14-312716-1

When I first heard of *Guns, Germs and Steel* (GGs), by Jared Diamond, I was disinclined to read it, and still have not done so conscientiously. In reading *A Troublesome Inheritance* by Nicholas Wade I have a better inkling of why my intuition made me avoid the former of these two best-selling titles. Apart from the 'harsh' title GGS is far too deterministic, accounting for culture in terms of metal weapons, disease, geography and other external rather than human factors. Diamond, like the famous anthropologists Franz Boas

and his student Ashley Montagu, deny the existence of race, regarding it as a "social construct" with no basis in biology – a "fallacy," a "dangerous myth," "America's original sin." Montagu even labeled it "witchcraft." They evidently believe race (and the diversity it implies) is somehow unrelated to biological and evolutionary reality, having arisen as the result of humanity's conceptual misunderstanding of itself.

The message of *Troublesome* is fairly simple: "race" and its biological, genetic, ethnic and social manifestations is a real phenomenon that can and should be studied without implying that its students are "racists" who believe in the superiority of one race over another. To deny the existence of race because some people are racist is an ideological and unscientific approach popular in some academic circles, mostly because it is a touchy and potentially inflammatory subject like politics or religion. But these too are deeply influential cultural realities.

Eugenics is also a taboo subject. While its extremely objectionable manifestations (sterilisation of perceived inferiors *etcetera*) is despicable, not only is breeding (artificial selection) a deliberate application of eugenics in the plant and animal world, it is also exercised through our free, human choice when it comes to "selecting" partners, often within our own race or ethnicity. Like seems to attract like, with evolutionary implications for biology and our cultural institutions. So race is a biological reality. Wade holds that there is substantial consensus about the traditional threefold distinction of Asian, Indo-European and African (Mongoloid, Caucasian and Negroid), with Australian and Native American as two less populous but distinctive groups. Here Wade reminds us of the famous Dmitry Belyaev experiment with foxes, our mammalian brethren. By selecting foxes simply for their degree of tameness, within a few generations he bred in many juvenile anatomical features that had not been selected for. If it works for foxes, why not for we human mammals? If no one denies the physical variation in stature, skin, hair and eye colour between ethnic groups (races) should we be surprised that there are different manifestations in the sphere of social behavior and culture, which also correlate with genetic variation?

Here Wade makes the compelling argument, backed up by diverse studies in the broad field of cultural anthropology, that the shift from tribal to city state, nation state and global polities has brought about inevitable change, which in a word has helped "tame" human nature, not least by forcing most individuals, in any given culture, to live and let live with a widening and more civilised community of neighbors beyond the narrow confines of family and tribe.

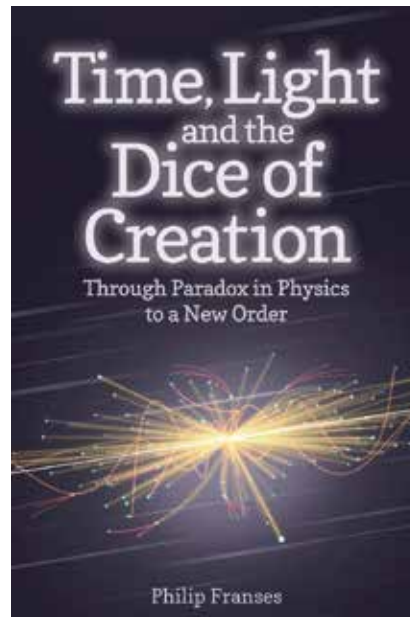
Thus, the murder rate has gone down steadily in the transition from tribal to more regional and nationally-structured polities that have instituted religion, the rule of law and other collectively civilising influences. [For skeptics who doubt such progress, mere rumination on the subject of improving human nature implies a higher aspiration and reluctance to regress]. Skeptics should also note the well-established biological evidence for the ongoing evolutionary juvenilisation of the human species (known as paedomorphosis) leading to a physical gracilisation, or decrease in robustness, and increasing “domestication” or tameness. We are no longer robust Neanderthals, at least in 96% of our genetic makeup (Network 116). Thus, biology and culture remain inextricable interwoven.

There is, it appears, no single gene to ensure “tameness” or civilisation in individuals or cultures as a whole, but “gene frequencies” play an important, collective role. The MAO-A gene is “associated with aggression” and occurs in different frequencies, in different individuals, resulting in different levels of aggression and delinquency in different ethnic groups. So genes influence human behavior and cause it to “vary from one race to another.” *Vive la difference*: but use it not for racist generalisations! Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) sites on the genome where at least 1% of the population has a non-standard DNA unit have helped define distinctive ethnic groups (races) that are generally consistent with the aforementioned threefold (plus 2) race distinctions. However, races are not sharply defined but rather are “clusters of individuals with genetic variation.”

Such individuals give the overall cultural group (cluster) certain propensities [rather as an individual might influence a group culturally]. To date the chicken and egg riddle of whether cultural propensities drive genetic variation or vice versa is unresolved, but almost certainly it is a complex two-way evolutionary dynamic. This exposition is appealing, at least to this reader, because it integrates the complex race debate holistically with biological and cultural evolution, and thus with history, including changing views on race and racism. Put another way, given that race and ethnicity is widely recognised, except by a few ideologically motivated, if well-meaning, naysayers, and is, moreover, responsible for much of what we call history, how could these cultural, biological (genetic) factors not be interwoven in a complex evolutionary dynamic with everything else in the biosphere, including tamed and untamed foxes, human delinquents and saints!?

Arguably we do not need to use the term “race” as a rigid label, if we

recognise, as Wade does, that “human evolution has been recent, copious and regional” affecting all individuals and cultures differently, and complexly, but not randomly. Using the overarching paradigm of cultural evolution (tribal though global polities), we see shifts in the propensity for a domestication, taming and juvenilisation of human nature, though not without reversals and regressions. Perhaps, therefore, we could use the dreaded “r” word in a different context and speak of the “race for a less troubled civilisation.”



Living with Paradox Paul Kieniewicz

TIME, LIGHT AND THE DICE OF CREATION Philip Franes

Floris Books, 2015, 235pp., £25, p/b -
ISBN 978-178250-172-5

The subtitle of Philip Franes's book is *Through Paradox in Physics to a New Order*. Franes takes the reader in a journey through modern physics. However, his book is ultimately less about physics, and more about how we think and approach physics. Central to his approach is the notion of paradox, and the many instances where paradox comes up. The best known example is the Copenhagen Interpretation of subatomic particles. A particle can be described as a wave or a particle, depending on how it interacts; depending also on the experiment that we design. What is it really? Most physicists dismiss the paradox as unimportant. Advice given to university students is usually, “shut up and calculate”. However, Franes views the paradox as essential, and suggests that we not only embrace it, but recognise that it is characteristic of the nature of the universe. Time, for example, can be viewed as travelling forwards or backwards. We live in a world of paradox, of irreconcilable dualities: darkness and light, chance and order, emptiness and form, zero

and unity. The Western description of nature takes an either-or approach to paradox. The human mind trained with Aristotelian logic is uncomfortable with paradox. The notion of “both” requires us to embrace paradox. What if, by embracing paradox we would come to a radically new description of the universe?

The chapters expand on each of the above dualities and how those arise in nature. His arguments are non-linear in the sense that the reader will have to let go of how he/she is used to thinking about dualities to appreciate what the writer is getting at. The central chapters of the book deal with Goethean Science, which appears to be a major influence in Franes's thinking. Those chapters are the easiest to follow and offer a clear account of Goethe's approach to science and how it differs from conventional approaches. Franes explores the relationship between the seed and the plant, how plant forms develop, how petals develop from primary structures.

The author's approach is somewhat Platonic, in that the most fundamental constituents of nature are viewed as dualities; pairs of opposites. The world we observe emanates from a hidden world of archetypes. At the root is zero and unity, potential and existence, form versus emptiness. Interestingly, such dualities also occur in many religious traditions including early Christian Gnosticism. Franes recognises this mythical dimension in his final section where he looks at the nature of time. Time is only incidental to quantum mechanics, as if it doesn't really exist. So where is it? What is its role? All creation myths tell the story of how time began. Particularly Hindu myths. He writes,

We have forgotten where time in the equations came from. We have forgotten the treasure of time, which is what oriented us, hidden underneath the ground of all this mathematics and physics. “t” is still there but everyone has forgotten what it represented. We have taken away from ourselves the very thing we need to live, the very story that organized us and orders us.

Overall, this book challenges the reader to adopt a new way of thinking about nature. To embrace paradox and see where that leads. Those who take the time and effort, and it will take an effort to follow the author's argument, will be rewarded by some startling new insights.

Paul Kieniewicz is an Astronomer and Geophysicist, co-founder of the Institute of Archetypal and Religious Studies, in Poland. He is a co-editor of the Scientific and Medical Network's Network Review and website. He writes on depth psychology, science, climate studies and early Christianity.

medicine – health

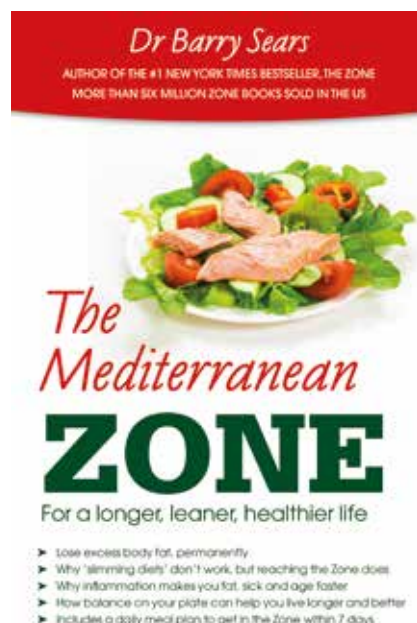
Diet-Induced Inflammation

David Lorimer

THE MEDITERRANEAN ZONE

Dr Barry Sears

Hammersmith Books, 2015, 363 pp., £9.99, p/b – ISBN 978-1-78161-073-2



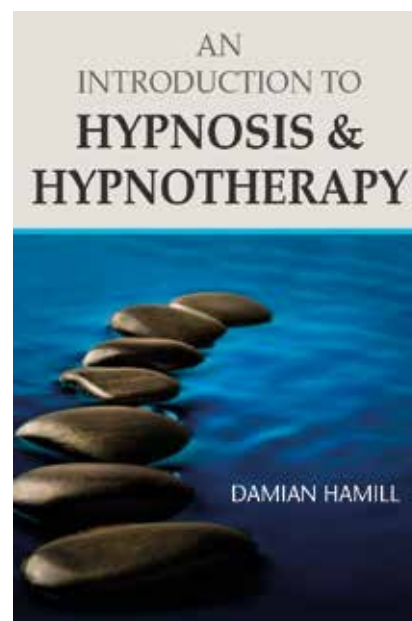
Barry Sears introduced the idea of the Zone in a book 20 years ago, and has written about a dozen books further explaining the concept, of which this is the latest. Readers will be familiar with the benefits of the Mediterranean diet, and perhaps with specific studies of long-lived Greek islanders. The concept of the Zone may be less familiar as a 'dietary roadmap for reaching and maintaining a constant hormonal balance that allows the body to operate at peak efficiency.' It is a metabolic state of stable blood sugar that diminishes risks of many chronic health issues. The book also clarifies the genuine traditional Mediterranean diet, not the false one full of pasta, pizza and bread. This diet is anti-inflammatory and antioxidant with a particular emphasis on the role of polyphenols. Specifically, it consists of one third low-fat protein, and two thirds colourful non-starchy vegetables and small amounts of fruit - note that this excludes white carbohydrates, including potatoes, all of which create more inflammation and increase the glycaemic load of the meal. This process is repeated every five hours, either as a meal or a snack.

The key is to maintain a balance between the two phases of inflammation activated by hormones, which themselves are controlled by our diet - these key hormones can be unbalanced by diet, which has happened on a wide scale over the last 50 years due to the

industrialisation of food associated with increases in obesity, the development of chronic disease at an earlier age and the acceleration of brain ageing. The author puts this schematically as increased diet-induced inflammation > increased obesity > increased diabetes > increased Alzheimer's, with a time delay as each process reaches critical mass. Even more seriously, it appears that changes in epigenetic markers due to diet can be passed on to the next generation, creating a cumulative effect. The good news is that this process can be reversed on an individual level, although it may take decades to do so collectively. The author goes on to explain the mechanics of inflammation as the real reason we gain weight, become ill and age at a faster rate. In this sense, Alzheimer's is an ageing of the brain. In order to control diet-induced inflammation, one has to control insulin and the levels of omega-6 fatty acids found in vegetable oils and processed foods. In addition, people are eating a great deal more high glycaemic load carbohydrates, thus increasing the secretion of insulin. At the same time, we have reduced our consumption of omega-3 fatty acids found, for instance, in fatty fish and fish oil. Moreover, we are generally consuming fewer polyphenols in terms of fruits and vegetables. It is this combination that has led us to our current crisis.

In further explaining the Zone, the author discusses how hormonal control is based on the balance of protein to glycaemic load at every meal, and the danger of the current standard Western diet in terms of a combination of excess omega-6 fatty acids coupled with high levels of insulin leading to increased oxidation throughout the body without adequate levels of polyphenols and of omega-3 fatty acids. The overall goal becomes a reduction in diet-induced inflammation. In contrast with much official advice, the author produces his own Mediterranean zone food pyramid with vegetables and fruit at the bottom, then low-fat protein, mono-unsaturated fats like olive oil and moderate amounts of grains and starches. He gives specific examples, advice and pages of recipes as well as a sample shopping list and a summary of basic rules (pp. 73-74). The good news, for some of us at least, is that both coffee and red wine contain good levels of polyphenols, as explained in the next section. Spices, especially coriander, as well as parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme contain very high levels. A further interesting implication is the association between decreased calorie consumption and longevity, which is elaborated in terms of the proposition that the key factor for steady energy is stable blood sugar level rather than calorie consumption as such. Perhaps the most interesting historical example of this is Luigi Cornaro, a 15th century Venetian nobleman who wrote his third anti-ageing book at the age of 95. The next section explains the correlation between the industrialisation of food and

the rise of diet-induced inflammation, which is not in fact due to any single factor, but rather to a combination. It was truly alarming to read that China now has 100 million diabetics. Advances in trans-generational epigenetics are now enabling us to understand the implications of the health timebomb. It is possible to lay down diet-induced epigenetic markers in the DNA, so that children born after 2000 are much more susceptible to obesity - hence 'the growth of the industrialisation of our food supply may be a driving force in an epigenetic shift in our genes that could be responsible for the epidemic rise of obesity, diabetes and eventually Alzheimer's.' (p. 159) However, as stated above, it is possible to reclaim our genetic future, but not without a major turnaround in our lifestyles and dietary preferences. This in turn has implications for medicine, which traditionally neglects diet, and perhaps for a health system based on maintaining wellness rather than treating the symptoms of chronic disease. The second half of the book is devoted to a more technical discussion of the central issues. The author's arguments make a great deal of sense to me and have real practical implications for all of us - we would be well advised to modify our diets in the direction he recommends, even if it is harder to go all the way.

**Debunking the Myths**

Chris Allen

AN INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOSIS AND HYPNOTHERAPY

Damian Hamill

Hypnotic Outcomes, 2015, 148 pp., £4.79, eBook - ISBN-13: 978-1-4566-0951-1 (Available from Amazon)

What if I'm in deep trance and the hypnotist has a heart attack and is unable to awaken me? Will I be stuck there? And if so, what will become of me?

What if the hypnotist tries to take control of my consciousness? Will I be strong enough to resist him? Can he force me to do something against my will? Like rob a bank or murder my wife?

What if I'm in a trance; can the hypnotherapist get me to reveal my innermost secrets?

Myths ... How do they come about? Well, in the case of hypnosis, one can point the finger in a number of directions. Count Dracula as portrayed by Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee is a good place to start. Their stirring performances—particularly in taking control of the minds of their hapless victims—have done a wonderful job in blurring the public perception of hypnosis and propagating widely held misconceptions, forming the basis upon which the questions above in italics are just a representative sample. But then again, some of the most famous names in the colourful history of hypnosis—especially notorious dabblers such as Mesmer—have also contributed to the immense confusion. Which is a shame really when one considers that the BMA endorsed hypnosis as a powerful therapeutic tool—with no known harmful side effects—as long ago as 1958. And it may come as a surprise to discover that the Royal Society of Medicine has a hypnosis and psychosomatic medicine section. Yet recent data indicates that psychiatric drugs such as tranquilizers and anti-depressants made up 8.6% of all NHS prescription items in 2010. And rising, causing concern not only because of the enormous cost but also because of well publicized side effects.

So what's going on? And can anything be done to promote the value of a natural alternative to over reliance of mood altering pharmaceuticals? And to debunk the myths that seem to shackle the more widespread use of therapeutic hypnosis? If these questions are of interest, then you could do worse than to investigate what Damian Hamill has to say in this book, first published in 2012. In the opinion of the reviewer, it is one of the very best ever written on the subject. But don't just take my word for it; if you go on the Amazon website, you will find that it has picked up 8 reviews—all of them with five stars.

'An Introduction to Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy' starts with a hard hitting introduction, likely to ruffle a few feathers in the psychotherapy community; continues with twelve chapters which cover a wide range of interesting topics; and ends with a short but inspiring conclusion.

Chapter 1 gives a brief history of hypnosis. Of particular note here is the section on the contribution of physician Milton H. Erickson (1901-1980) who is generally regarded as the most influential hypnotherapist of the 20th century.

Chapter 2 explores what hypnosis is all about. The author attempts to dispel many of the misconceptions surrounding the subject. He proceeds to set the record straight, dealing with each of the most oft quoted myths in turn. He does however concede that it is little wonder that people have so many incorrect preconceived ideas and notions given the fact that there is no consensus even amongst practitioners as to what hypnosis *actually is*. He offers the following working definition to get the reader thinking: "*An altered state of awareness effected by total concentration on the voice of the therapist. It will result in measurable physical, neurophysiological and psychological changes in which may be produced distortion of emotion, sensation, image and time*". The author admits that whereas this may not be the whole story—an understandable position given that even consciousness researchers struggle to define human **awareness** in the first place—it is at least somewhere at which to start.

Chapter 3 deals in detail with common hypnotic phenomena that seem to occur within trance with great frequency. These include but are not restricted to: Catalepsy—inhibition of motor movement ... Ideo-motor activity—physical manifestations of mental perceptions ... Amnesia ... Dissociation ... Regression ... Hallucinations ... Time Distortion.

Chapter 4 concerns different types of hypnosis which one might not recognise as such. These include: Daydreaming ... Highway hypnosis—drifting off whilst driving ... Hypnogogic—the intermediate state just before falling asleep ... Hypnopompic—the condition after being sleep but just before one becomes fully awake ... Traditional or authoritarian hypnosis in which the subject responds to clear instructions ... Non-traditional, permissive or naturalistic hypnosis—based primarily on the work of Milton Erickson, in which the subject responds to open or indirect suggestions.

Chapter 5 contains a detailed discussion of individual responses and susceptibility. Chapter 6 evaluates the best known theories which attempt to explain the remarkable range of hypnotic phenomena. These include: Atavistic Immobilisation ... Modified Sleep ... Suggestion. Chapters 7 to 12 concern such matters as trance induction, communication, case history, client management and an overview of major therapeutic approaches. They are all well written and informative but probably of most interest to professionals in the field.

In the one-page conclusion, the author suggests that hypnosis has a great deal to offer if used from an ethical position of guidance and encouragement and not one of domination and self-

aggrandisement. He expresses the hope that he has succeeded in sweeping aside much of the mysticism and mystery that surrounds the subject. And make no mistake about it ... He has. Whether you're a newcomer to this field seeking to become less confused or an experienced practitioner wishing to build up your Continuous Professional Development, this book is a gem, a very useful read indeed.

Finally in answer to those questions: *If it were to happen, you'll come out of trance naturally at your own pace as if you'd just fallen asleep. You may then have to apply emergency first aid. Mind control under these circumstances simply isn't possible and is confusing hypnosis with an occult power or siddhi which—according to the esoteric literature—is said to be achievable after years of austere spiritual discipline and dedicated practice at the feet of a master in some remote location like a monastery in the Himalayas ... And not currently available through any of the recognised training organisations for Hypnotherapy in the UK. No, definitely not; you can keep them to yourself; you retain an inner censor even in deep trance.*

Chris Allen is a retired Technical Author with a degree in physics and many years of experience working as a contractor in such industries as Avionics, Defence and Transport. He is a crime writer specialising in unusual and well researched fiction. He is also a practising hypnotherapist and a full member of the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis. He has a lifelong interest in military history, jurisprudence, criminology and Advaita Vedanta philosophy. Web site: www.cach.co.uk

Vital Energy

David Lorimer

ANCIENT SECRET OF THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Peter Kelder

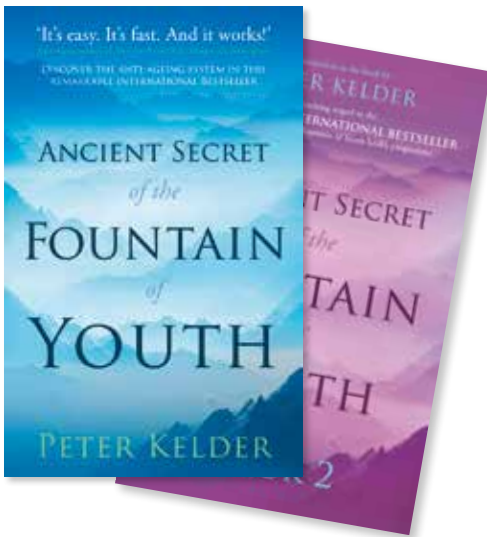
Virgin Books, 2011, 106 pp., £8.99, p/b – ISBN 978-0-7535-4005-3

ANCIENT SECRET OF THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH – BOOK 2

Various authors

Virgin Books, 2012, 308 pp., £8.99, p/b – ISBN 978-0-75-354007-7

I was recently travelling in the United States and stayed with a friend in Virginia, on whose shelf I found the first of these books. Just perusing some comments from previous readers on the extraordinary effects of practising the exercises in this book was enough to pique my curiosity. So I read it, and started practising what are called the five rites straight away. The book first came out in 1939, and told



the story of an ex-British Army officer and diplomat, Col Bradford, who had travelled to a monastery deep in Tibet. When Peter Kelder first met him, he looked old and was walking with a stick. The Colonel invited him to accompany him on his travels, but the author turned down the offer. Some years later, Col Bradford appeared again at his door and was almost unrecognisable due to the fact that he looked 25 years younger rather than four years older. The Colonel tells his own story where he was amazed when, after three months in the monastery, he looked at himself in the mirror to find a much more youthful person looking back.

The book then explains how to perform the five rites, starting with only three repetitions and gradually moving up to 21. Some are similar to yoga exercises, and lead to improved circulation, muscular strength and flexibility. The first one, however, consists of spinning round in a clockwise direction and can serve as an introduction to the theory behind the practice, namely that, as one grows older, the speed of circulation of the chakras slows down and becomes uncoordinated. The exercises are meant to remedy this and provide a boost to the vital energy, prana or qi so that the physical system as a whole benefits from increased energy flow. Research, however, has been more along the lines of surveys and feedback than systematic trials, but it makes practical and intuitive sense to me.

In addition, mental attitude is very important: we must want to think, act and feel as a younger version of ourselves and can create an affirmation to this effect that will be carried out through the operation of the superconscious, as the author explains. He also gives advice on diet and food combining as well as an exercise for men's voices. The sixth rite receives a separate treatment and is designed to rechannel sexual energy.

The second book builds on the first with experts contributing more detail to the basic concepts and also giving a historical context through the travels of other scholars and an interesting conversation with Robert Thurman. Helena Blavatsky, Baird Spalding,

Alexandra David-Neel, Theodore Illion and WY Evans-Wentz all travelled to Tibet before or during the 1930s and clearly discovered some of the same secrets set out in this book. Alexandra David-Neel learned Tumo breathing and was able to go about in light clothes even in freezing temperatures. She also lived until the age of 101. Various authors reinforce the point that it is quality of life or health span that really counts, while Robert Thurman emphasises the importance of compassion. This second book contains more detailed stories of people whose lives have been transformed by these exercises. The authors explore in more depth the understanding of energy that underlies not only these practices, but also Tai Chi and Qigong. The section on the exercises themselves adds a few more postures, while there is an extensive chapter on food combining and diet, as well as on the energetics of the voice, sound and meditation. All this expands the rationale of the first book and encourages readers to persist in their practice of the rites. Although I have only been practising them myself for just over three weeks as I write, they have certainly contributed to an increase in strength, flexibility and energy.

philosophy – spirituality

The Wisdom of Christ

Edi Bilimoria

THE TEACHER, VOLUME ONE: THE DAWNING EPOCH

Beinsa Douno

Shining Word Press, 2016, 412 pp., £30, h/b (also p/b) – ISBN 978-1-905398-36-2

The hundred-year period starting from around the middle of the nineteenth century was especially momentous for a new wave of spirituality that affirmed the Immortal and Timeless verities of all ages, but in a manner and form to suit the prevailing times, particularly in the West, which was then ultra-materialistic. The fertile period of spiritual effulgence was privy to such luminaries as Helena Blavatsky and Annie Besant in the Theosophical Society, William James, Manly Hall and Emerson in America, Ramana Maharshi and Krishnamurti in India, Rudolf Steiner in Europe – and Beinsa Douno the Bulgarian sage of whom Einstein said 'All the world renders homage to me and I render homage to the Master Peter Deunov [Beinsa Douno] from Bulgaria'.

The book presents the lectures of Beinsa Douno based on passages from the Bible with the aim of preparing humanity for a new epoch by imparting an understanding of the practical guidance from the scriptures that, at a profound level, can only be attained by direct contact with its

source. Whereas it would naturally be profitable to read sequentially, there is no indispensable need to do so. Why? Because in the manner of any spiritual book on eternal truths about the inner life of Man, the material is organic, so to speak like a hologram or a fractal. An harassed reader may therefore 'dip into' any chapter at random since each one mirrors the whole purpose of the book. And that purpose is to assist the earnest disciple (hopefully, you the reader) to acquire spiritual enrichment gained through the practical wisdom and application of the Christ's Teachings.

However, it is no hyperbole that there are countless books purporting to sort out our lives by providing guidance based on the Christ's words. Does this book stand out from the crowd, and if so, how and why? But first, who is Beinsa Douno? Do we know him? Of course there are the historical facts about his life and literary output, but can we claim to know the soul nature of the sage? The writer makes no such claims. Nonetheless, there are facts to consider and signs to read. A slight diversion is needed.



We have just had the EU Referendum. Notwithstanding all the ill-feeling and personal invectives on both sides of the debate, the sole criterion for both the exit and remain factions has been economics, brutal factionalism to put it bluntly, as if a material utopia were the sole yardstick of human happiness. But now look to any religion and culture from ancient antiquity to modern times, whether to the East or to the West. What do we find? Not a single one of the sages and philosophers ever allowed the self-realisation of truth to be sullied by the lure of establishing any earthly Utopia, or his life-energy to be wasted in inventing techniques and technologies or social schemes and economic models for dealing with the turmoil and malice of the world's politics, economics and physical conditions at their own level. Each one of them saw with unerring insight that it was unregenerate man the world over – spiritually impoverished man – who

was himself the prolific spawner of the ubiquitous cruelty and suffering around him; and so it was through man himself, his character, not his possessions, that the way must be found to redeem the world situation: the way of truth, wisdom and love – the transformed man. However, none of the saints and prophets of old like Buddha, Zarathustra or Christ, or the sage-philosophers such as Plato and Pythagoras of ancient times and Krishnamurti, Brunton and Emerson in recent years, ever preached a diet of material poverty or self-mortification as the highway to truth. Supremely practical men, they understood the value of the material existence and its enjoyment; but their counsel was ever the same – the evils resulting from ignorance of our true spiritual nature and the healing hand of the divine physician.

It is exactly the same with Beinsa Douno. On page 144 we find the sage counselling about wealth: 'I am not recommending poverty. I recommend three types of wealth: physical, mental and spiritual wealth. But it is the spiritual wealth – 'Collect treasures' – in the Christ's words (Matthew 6: 19-21) that is by far the most important, and the most neglected, that obviously constitutes the theme of this book, which provides practical guidance on life-challenging situations, along with instructions on surmounting obstacles in the path of the neophyte. Douno considers a whole host of subjects like hope, faith and love, good and evil, sin, mastering destiny, moral character, service and sacrifice, correct thought and prayer.

At this juncture we must issue a warning of utmost significance. And it is this.

There are at three principal ways of reading any sacred texts, such as the *Upanishads*, the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, or the Bible: 1. the dead-letter literal and intellectual; 2. the symbolical and intuition; and 3. the Spiritual. These three modes correspond to: 1. reading with the brain, forming concepts; 2. reading through the mind, invoking percepts; and 3. reading with a quiescent brain in order to sense the soft intimations of the Soul.¹ If the reader cannot (or chooses not to) raise his consciousness beyond the literal and intellectual then he had better put away this book (or any other spiritual and religious book) for good; for this kind of level 1. reading is the *modus operandi* of the sort of dry, academic pedagogy that indulges in interminable, dead-ended debates in the gymnasium of the left brain that get nowhere, other than polarizing opinions, in turn generating the toxic cocktail of confusion, ill-feeling, and the scorn shown towards religion by the vast majority of scientists, plus the calumny heaped upon religious teachers by those very scientists who presumptuously think that they know better.

Deep truths about Man's inner nature cannot be written down in words to be taken at face value. They can only impart their meaning in words through symbols, allegories and metaphors; and this is where the strength of the book lies and why its value rises way above the rabble of materialists who seek to denounce religion without having a clue about the allegorical nature of the teachings. The historical authenticity of the characters in the New Testament is of minor concern. What is of major significance is that these characters – men and women – are really the personifications of forces and processes which take place in the body and psyche of each human being. Needless to point out then, that words like God, the Lord and the devil, frequently used by Beinsa Douno, must always be understood in their universal meaning and never be taken in an anthropomorphic sense.

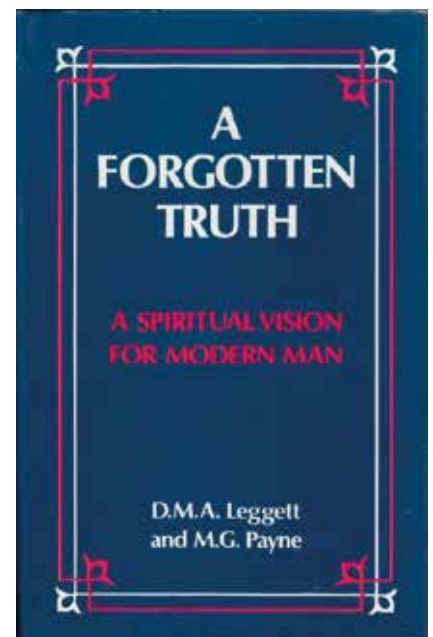
The chapters follow a general pattern: a pithy quote from the Bible (with an expanded version in footnotes), followed by a brief account of its essential meaning, which is then fully amplified by way of stories to illuminate the meaning further, then an exposition on the practical import for the everyday life of the ordinary man. I chuckled no end about the story (p. 109) of the two inquisitive frogs who fell into a pail of milk and swam round in circles. One frog got fed up (don't we all when faced with a boring task), lay down at the bottom to rest and then died; but his companion continued swimming until the constant churning of the milk turned it into butter, which then provided a firm foundation for him to hop out of the pail. The moral: 'Constancy in Life', the message of Ecclesiastes 6:12, *Who knoweth what is good for a man in his life?* But I can just imagine all the arguments of the literalists (in their droves) taking the story at face value: surely the milk couldn't suddenly just turn to butter; wouldn't his legs get stuck when the milk started congealing, how does a frog know that churning milk would turn it into butter, how high can a frog jump, etc.? Apropos, it is comforting to know that when we are winging or suffering, it means that there is something in our souls that God must chip off, and when we sin, 'a sinner is a stone out of which the divine chisel will form a graceful statue' (p. 111).

One of the most revealing chapters (for me) is 'The Grain of Wheat, the Emblem of the Human Soul' based on John 12:24 (pp. 137-149). It is an eloquent exposition of how a grain of wheat metaphorically depicts the history of nature's development and the human soul passing through the cyclical stages of death, sprouting, growth, and seeds. Then there are carefully worded comments on topics such as the future of our planet, the beginning of a new epoch, divine providence and the White Brotherhood (Douno's School

of Esoteric Christianity is called 'School of the Universal White Brotherhood'). I was fascinated by a section on 'The Testament of the Colour Rays of Light' correlating the spectrum of light with that of spiritual qualities and also the days of the week. This is in line with the occult teachings on the mystical nature of colour from Douno's contemporaries like Blavatsky, Bailey and Steiner.

In conclusion then, we have been bequeathed a book that adds new meaning to the Christian scriptures and given us the practical and usable tools and techniques to apply the teachings in the course of our daily lives. It fulfills a desperate need to inject the living vitality of esoteric Christianity into what can only be referred to as the moribund shell of institutionalised 'Churchianity'. The book is replete with Appendixes, a Bibliography, and References, the latter include an enumeration in both Bulgarian and English of the lectures constituting the book chapters, all painstakingly and lovingly assembled by the two translators Maria Mitovska and Harry Carr.

¹These three modes correspond very broadly with William James's account of brain function: productive, permissive or releasing, and transmissive. See William James, 'Human Immortality (1898)', <http://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/jimmortal.html>.



A Science of the Spirit

David Lorimer

A FORGOTTEN TRUTH
D.M.A. (Peter) Leggett and Max Payne
White Crow Books, 2016 (1986),
237 pp., £14.95, p/b – ISBN 978-1-910121-98-6

THE SACRED QUEST

D.M.A. Leggett

White Crow Books, 2016 (1987),
237 pp., £14.95, p/b – ISBN 978-1-78677-000-4

Many readers will be familiar with Max Payne, whose obituary we published in this Review last summer, and who was a regular contributor of book reviews at the interface between science and spirituality. Fewer will now know about Peter Leggett (1912-1995), one of the founding members of the Network and an exact contemporary of George Blaker at Trinity College, Cambridge. Peter was a mathematician who eventually became vice chancellor of Surrey University, where he held some early meetings of the Network, including a conference on reincarnation in 1974. He was a great friend and mentor to me, and was the first chairman of the Network Council before Peter Fenwick. I remember him once telling me about a conversation he had had with a bishop about reincarnation (the forgotten truth of the first book), where the bishop had told him that if he accepted reincarnation, he would have to change his whole theology!

The subtitles of these books – which I read with profit when they originally came out – are significant in referring to a spiritual vision for modern man and the integration of experiment with experience in arriving at a coherent worldview. Both Max and Peter epitomised the Network approach of balancing rigour with openness, and indeed it was Peter who invited Max to join the Network after the initial meeting recommended writing letters to possible members. The books draw on a wide range of reading, not all of which will still be familiar to contemporary readers. Sir Kelvin Spencer, another founding member, provides the forewords to both books. He quotes Sir Alister Hardy's remark that our civilisation has been built upon the spiritual interpretation of the world and that if the majority of the population come to have a materialistic view, the whole nature of our way of life may change, and not for the better. He urges readers to remember that we are essentially spiritual beings, and that the spirit can move mountains. He also observes that scientific materialism has evacuated our sense of purpose, but there is no intrinsic reason why science cannot be combined with a spiritual outlook.

In *A Forgotten Truth*, Peter begins with a discussion of what constitutes evidence, widening his view beyond the repeatability of science and arguing for the validity of cumulative evidence of reliably recorded happenings or experiences. He builds on this in a discussion of the distinctive roles of science and religion before considering evidence from the Scriptures about the nature of God, fundamental principles and application. This leads him to formulate a hypothesis (p. 48) consistent with these observations that can then be tested by experience. His understanding of God is that from which all that proceeds, while the relationship of a human being to God

is likened to the cells of the body. Human beings are charioteers of their body, while the purpose of human life is learning lessons in a school of spiritual development. The purpose or end is an ever expanding and ever deepening consciousness. This provides an inspiring philosophy of life that is then discussed with reference to mysticism, psychology, biology, physics and the paranormal. The next chapter consists of extracts from talks by a discarnate teacher on various aspects of life; the tone is somewhat apocalyptic but sheds further light on the deeper nature of the human being.

The second part, co-authored with Max Payne, discusses the implications of Peter's hypothesis for religion, science and society in terms of the need for a new metaphysic and the necessity of spiritual evolution integrating both Western and Eastern perspectives. In conclusion, they argue that neither scientific humanism nor Christianity as normally presented can provide a compelling and realistic vision of the future. We need a new understanding based on the integration of science and spirituality, which is what this book provides in terms of a vision that will give purpose and meaning to human life.

A Sacred Quest records Peter's intellectual and spiritual journey and begins with the question of what education is for. He sees contemporary education as essentially utilitarian, neglecting its role in helping young people develop a philosophy of life. This book provides the basis for such a philosophy or metaphysic. Parts Two and Three look at evidential insights from mysticism, poetry and the paranormal in terms of out of body experiences, survival and reincarnation. This enables him to formulate a series of propositions, that are worth quoting in detail (p. 96):

- Man is not just 5 pounds' worth of chemicals and a lot of water.
- Man, when alive, can function as a self-conscious being independently of his physical body.
- Man's consciousness survives the death of his physical body.
- In the post physical death state man undergoes some kind of judgement/ review of the life just ended.
- Man evolves through a series of lives, the circumstances of which are interconnected.
- Love, justice and tension exist at the heart of the universe.
- Unity underlies all that is.

In discussing the purpose of human life, Peter develops a further series of propositions suggested by the evidence he considers. He moves on to a more detailed consideration of Christianity and the relationship between Jesus the man in Christ the divine spirit. Next, he explores the subtle constitution of the human being and the purpose of life in terms of the expansion of consciousness, a vision he also shared with Sir George Trevelyan. The key, as explained in the last part, is application, and it is here that Peter tackles the thorny issues of evil, sin and suffering as well as the wisdom derived as the fruit of experience. This brings him full-circle back to education and he quotes the UN Secretary-General U Thant in advocating an integration of Eastern and Western approaches so that there is equal emphasis on intellectual, moral and spiritual development. Given that the content of these books is perennial, even if many more books have been published in the intervening period, readers can profitably engage with the arguments and assess for themselves the extent to which they feel the reasoning is sound in the light of the evidence considered. This is classic Network thinking.

Becoming of both Minds

Nicholas Colloff

THE SECRET TEACHERS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

Gary Lachman (SMN)

Tarcher Penguin, 2015, 509 pp., \$19.95, p/b - ISBN: 978-0-399-16680-8

An apocryphal story has Picasso confronted on a train by a man waving a photograph of his wife under his nose declaiming, "Why do you not paint things as they are? Like this". "You mean small, square and rather flat," responds Picasso! Different minds perceive differently but what if our own, apparently single mind, has two distinct modes of behaviour? The one, like Picasso, seeing intuitively, things as a whole and the patterns that connect; and, the second, like the man, in precise yet fragmented, mechanically sequenced parts, of high utility but reduced depth or meaning. This, in a compressed nutshell, was the thesis of Iain McGilchrist's 'The Mastery and His Emissary' that explored in a renewing way the discussion of 'right and left brain asymmetry' and suggested that the emissary, the utilitarian, reductionist if practical brain, had usurped its place and become the dominant mode of perception. We have come to know much of value in the process but drained life of meaning and purpose.

The Western esoteric traditions are in essence pathways to meaning that aim to transform our way of seeing who and where we are, not an accidental part in a meaningless universe, but as a living

being connected, enfolded within a cosmic order that is sacred. Could our understanding, Lachman asks in this accomplished book, of those traditions be enriched by looking at them through a lens borrowed from McGilchrist? As practices for replenishing and repositioning the relationship between our two minds, of restoring them to balance?

With this question in mind, Lachman takes us on a tour through the multiple pathways, convergent and divergent, that comprise the Western esoteric tradition, secret sometimes out of necessity either to guard knowledge from the ignorant or hide it from the persecutors but primarily because though culturally profoundly important and creative, mostly unacknowledged especially since we entered Yeats' 'the three provincial centuries' of 'left brain dominance'. It is all deftly handled, with sufficient space devoted to the key figures and contexts, so that you emerge with a sense of their contribution and their significance to the whole, often with a desire to know more; and, you recognise that the motif of double mindedness does run through the traditions.

You notice too how difficult it is to maintain a sense of balance betwixt the two minds – what Lachman describes as 'the Goldilocks' moment' where each finds its appropriate balance, place, and they enrich rather than confront one another. This is partly, as Lachman notes, the apparent violence of the utilitarian left brain that reaches for the constant security of the certain, the complete, even at the expense of the whole, extinguishing vulnerability to the felt, the emergent, the unknowable. While there is a necessary truth in this, what if one imagines it from the other side? The emissary has tasks to perform, a life to run and secure, all important but so often little acknowledged or praised. Is it akin to being the elder brother of the prodigal son whose service is too easily taken for granted? Tripping into the imaginal, the cosmic, the 'ungrund' is transformative but to what purpose if not practised here and now, in each and every encounter within the life that we are given?

This brings us to the importance of Lachman's second lens – does our consciousness change over time in a way that creates grounds for hope that this dichotomy between minds will find, if not 'a solution', a newly conscious way of being lived out? One possible answer is in the work of the Swiss German philosopher, Jean Gebser, who, in his magnum opus, 'The Ever Present Origin' sets out a masterful case for how human consciousness has evolved through specific, describable stages from magical to mythical to mental-rational to now the possibility of the integral. At the heart of this possibility is the invitation to live 'ego-free', not

it must be seen 'ego-less'. 'Ego-free' is where each preceding structure of consciousness is enfolded within the new, recognised as valuable but transformed by being seen from within the new structure; and, this structure is itself illuminated by the Origin with a renewing transparency. Perhaps the master and the emissary can finally become friends rather than master and servant?

Likewise with McGilchrist, this is an accompanying lens through which we follow the esoteric traditions as they unfold. Each tradition wants to transform us but each must speak into, and reckon with, the place it finds itself with regard to our presiding 'structure of consciousness'. Our brains are, as Bergson suggested, limiting devices so that we can be both open out to but also critically bear consciousness, they are what we navigate with and at different times navigation may require different maps. One way of reading Lachman's book is to see each tradition seeking to create the necessary map required at the time to find one's way to transformation – no map is ever redundant, one can learn from all of them, but no map is ever complete and new one's may add features not before noticed as necessary because the demands of consciousness have changed.

The book can also be read, more simply, as a treasure trove of lucid exposition. My own favorites were the passages on Plotinus that allow you to taste what it might mean to navigate the One; a compelling description of the 'Imaginal' through the eyes of Surawardi and his inspiration for Henri Corbin to coin the term; and, on why Dante is an esoteric thinker as well as a great poet.

Meanwhile, neither lens is wielded in a way that tends towards reductionism – we may have two brains because consciousness is structured that way, not the reverse, and accepting neither lens as 'true' is necessary in order to profit from the book. The beauty of the book is indeed in the faithful, sensitive rendition of the essences of the traditions themselves whilst continuing to pose the question to all of them: where and how do we find the right balance between whole and part, transcendence into meaning and practice into life? There can be no more important question.

Nicholas Colloff studied philosophy, psychology and theology at London and Oxford. He is the executive director of the Argidius Foundation.

The Outsider and Beyond

David Lorimer

COLLECTED ESSAYS ON PHILOSOPHERS

Colin Wilson (edited by Colin Stanley)

Cambridge Scholars, 2016, 235 pp., £47.99, h/b – ISBN 978-1-4438-8901-8

I still remember my sense of intellectual excitement when I first read *The Outsider* in my last year at St Andrews (my daughter Charlotte is now at Durham and was also very taken by it when she read it last year). Subsequently, Colin was the main reader for my first book *Survival* in 1984, and strongly recommended its publication. Later, I went to see him at his home in Cornwall where he offered visitors not only copious wine but also £5 if they could suggest another place for a bookshelf – he had some 25,000 volumes, and even his garage was full. Part of the reason for my excitement was reading Colin's critique of the French existentialists, in particular Camus and Sartre. In addition, he opened up huge new avenues (also with his second book *Religion and the Rebel*) to Hermann Hesse, William Blake, Dostoevsky, TE Hulme, Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, AN Whitehead, Friedrich Nietzsche and many other writers, who I proceeded to read.

This book brings together 17 essays on a wide variety of philosophers. Some of these are short newspaper articles on the Oxford philosophers Sir Freddie Ayer, Sir Peter Strawson and Sir Geoffrey Warnock, with whom he has very little in common, but the other two in the series, with Sir Karl Popper and CD Broad are more engaging. Broad criticises fellow philosophers for ignoring psychical research, while Popper's view on Wilson's work is very interesting as he takes him to task for overrating self-expression, adding that artists, poets and scientists 'become great insofar as they reach out to something outside themselves.' I think this is an important point in relation to Colin's overall approach. His most basic contention is that ordinary consciousness is subnormal, and that we should make every effort to transcend and intensify it. His original book was written before publication of Maslow's work on peak experiences, which helped him flesh out this picture of a spectrum of conscious states. Since then, transpersonal psychology has considerably extended this analysis.

In his essay on Camus and the even more extensive one on Sartre, he criticises their approach to contingency (nausea) and absurdity by failing to realise the responsibility we all have with respect to our perception in terms of intentionality, as explained by Husserl (there is also an essay on him). One of the examples given by Camus is seeing a man talking and gesticulating

in a phone box - this is only absurd if one does not know what the man is talking about. On a wider front, I wrote an essay in the 1970s contrasting the approach of Camus with the experience and writings of Victor Frankl in Auschwitz - he was able to realise meaning even in those circumstances. Both Camus and Sartre try to convince their readers that this passive perception of absurdity is actually how things are. Sartre even tries to construct a philosophy of freedom on top of the contention that man is a useless passion; this does not really work, as Colin shows very clearly. Sartre also denies Husserl's idea of a transcendental ego, which is arguably the very basis of freedom and corresponds to the witness consciousness of the Upanishads and mindfulness.

Nietzsche was an important influence on his thinking since he conveys an intense feeling of vitality and aliveness, especially in two key experiences of his life, which are also related to the development of his idea of will to power. In an essay on Spinoza, Colin quotes Nietzsche as saying that 'it has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy up till now has consisted of - namely, the confession of its inventor, and a sort of involuntary and subconscious autobiography.' This insight applies to Nietzsche himself and indeed to Colin as well as other philosophers discussed in this book, including Sartre and Foucault.

The clearest answer to this question is given in the final essay on Whitehead, who features in *Religion and the Rebel* (Colin has a much higher opinion of Whitehead than Russell). Whitehead put forward an overall system (in *Process and Reality*) as a basis for explaining every element of our experience, and criticises the bifurcation of nature brought about by Western philosophy. For him, the universe is not separated from the human mind and we have two modes of attention or intention, presentational immediacy and what he calls causal efficacy, which Colin interprets as meaning perception. These can come together in symbolic perception, which one finds in the poetry of Wordsworth. To lose a sense of meaning is to lose a sense of causal efficacy, and this feeling is at the basis of existential despair. In Whitehead's scheme, humans are a dynamic expression of the consequent nature of God and as such part of divine evolution in the actualisation of new possibilities. It was good to revisit these existential themes in this collection of essays, but I felt that the overall perspective was perhaps too individual without a sense of belonging to a larger whole and indeed serving that whole with love. Although Colin makes frequent references to mystics, he does not take the step of shifting his identity from self to Self, although he does

open up important new dimensions of human freedom and makes some very significant criticisms of the limitations of existentialist thought.

A Moral Compass

IN SEARCH OF THE COMMON GOOD

Jack E. Brush

iff Books (John Hunt), 2016, 132 pp., £9.99, p/b - ISBN 978-1-78535-291-1

This stimulating book is a sequel to *Citizens of the Broken Compass*, which I reviewed in Network 118, and is subtitled 'guideposts for concerned citizens.' It is a wide-ranging historical review of the relationship between law and order in a cosmic sense and in a moral sense. The theme of the common good was also discussed in the previous book, and some themes reappear here. The distinctions the author makes between power, force and violence are timely in view of current events. For him, force compels and coerces, while power persuades and convinces; when force becomes destructive, it crosses over into violence. In this context, power and violence are inversely proportional, and by these definitions the US is in fact a superforce rather than a superpower, aiming as it does at full spectrum dominance. Moral authority, the author contends, stems from power rather than force, and here there is an interesting parallel with Stephan Schwartz's notion of beingness in his book reviewed in another section.

For Brush, the most sympathetic of the ancients is the Stoic Cicero, whom he quotes at some length. For the Stoics, natural law permeates the universe like a membrane and can be apprehended through reason; the law is immanent rather than imposed. Hence Cicero writes that 'law is the highest reason, rooted in nature... and established in the human mind.' (p. 21) Acting morally is acting in accordance with the common good corresponding to the connectivity of things; 'human beings are born the sake of human beings' according to Cicero. Interestingly, Brush argues that the loss of this cosmic dimension of imposed law led to a literalistic interpretation of the Bible.

Descartes, Newton and Kant all contributed to the emergence of a mechanistic view that separated the physical or cosmic from the moral. For Descartes, law was grounded in the immutability of God, while the metaphor of the machine allows no free will or purpose. It was only a matter of time before God was eliminated from this universe and we thus find ourselves subject to moral nihilism with no reliable basis for establishing moral values and making moral decisions. Darwin and Freud further contributed to this process where the emphasis is shifted from rational in the phrase

'rational animal' to 'rational animal' subject to powerful sexual drives. In addition, historicism reinforced this process by demonstrating the cultural relativity of values.

Brush advances a new departure, starting from an analogy of physical constants as fixed points, with the self experienced as a centre of unity and continuity. He then proposes three polarities or axes of human behaviour: force - power, life - spirit and time - eternity. His distinction between force and power, defined above, exactly corresponds to the system of David Hawkins, who is not mentioned here and whose work could have added to the argument. Although he does not formulate it like this, the author could have added a further polarity of individual - social. In relation to society, he proposes that these polarities become processes of self-knowledge, self-actualisation and the transformation of relationships. The full expression of these processes is hampered by excessive individualism, itself related to property rights described by Locke and incorporated in the American constitution. This sets up a tension between individual interests and the common good, where the corresponding interests are seen to be freedom and national security. Brush makes less use of holistic arguments from modern science here than in his earlier book, but he does describe the evolution of our modern emphasis on human rights from Hobbes, where the individual is the building block of society rather than being embedded in it.

He develops three guideposts for compliance with natural law: respectful dialogue, opportuneness of action and community building. He applies these to specific situations by way of explanation, but cautions that the last guidepost has been subverted by consensus building through manipulation of public opinion going back to Freud's nephew, Edward Bernays, in the aftermath of the First World War. What is really at stake here is the relationship between metaphysics and ethics, which is the underlying theme of my book *Whole in One*, subtitled 'the near death experience and the ethic of interconnectedness.' My proposal is that mystical experience and the life review - as well as parallels in depth psychology, physics, biology and ecology - point to an underlying oneness of life, being and consciousness so that we are in a very real sense one another. In this context, the golden rule is not only ethical, but ultimately logical. The moral order of interconnectedness is embedded in a metaphysic of the oneness of consciousness. Having said all this, I applaud the highlighting of the common good, which we must now apply on planetary scale rather than pursuing selfish nationalism at the expense of the whole and indeed of Nature.

psychology – consciousness studies

Psi and the Brain

Robert Charman

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AND THE BRAIN: EXPLORING THE NEUROPHYSIOLOGY OF PSI

Bryan J Williams

Australian Institute of Parapsychology
Research Inc. Gladesville, NSW, 2015,
135 pp., \$ 35. Monograph No3. ISBN
978-0-9870772-2-6

Bryan William is a Research Affiliate, Psychical Research Foundation, Texas, and has written many articles on psi and has contributed the chapters on *Revisiting the Ganzfeld Debate: A Basic Review and Assessment* and *Experimental Examinations of the Reported Abilities of a Psychic Claimant: A Review of Experiments and Explorations with Sean Harribance* in Broderick & Goertzel (2015).

With a Foreword by Dr Edward F. Kelly, Visiting Professor, Division of Perceptual Studies, University of Virginia, this AIPRI commissioned peer-reviewed monograph with some 250 references is a valiant attempt to bring some order into the complex field of research into the neural correlates of psi activity using electroencephalography (EEG), event related potentials (ERPs) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). If neuropsychologists can determine which areas and which structures of the brain 'light up' during different manifestations of psi such as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, micro-psychokinesis (microPK), recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK) or macroPK (poltergeistic phenomena), then this would increase the possibility of psi being accepted by the neurosciences on an evidential basis. If research can also demonstrate which of the four brainwave frequency bands predominates during successful psi in terms of voltage amplitude compared to the other bands then maybe we will be able to use this knowledge to train people in psi using brainwave biofeedback.

In his Introduction Williams outlines the scope of his inquiry, discusses the pioneering survey achievements of the early years of the Society for Psychical Research, presents some interesting anecdotal cases, looks at the work of J.B. Rhine and surveys the range of modern neurological research into psi phenomena. The following nine chapters are devoted to a detailed explanation and evaluation of the findings of individual studies and meta-analyses

of research into each of these different manifestations of psi. What becomes very clear is that when you are dealing with the ever fluctuating changes of brain activity arising from a multitude of possible confounding causes extracting signal from noise, chance correlation and artefact is not easy.

At the end of his review Williams comes to some guarded conclusions concerning this field of psi research that may act as a guide to present practice and future research. There seems a good correlation between an increase in alpha wave amplitude relative to the other brain wave bands in successful ESP performance implying that a calm receptive mind increases the likelihood of psi performance. While this finding holds true in general, it seems especially true for those with a good psychic record such as Sean Harribance and Michael Bessent. There is a hint of a functional oddness in the brains of high performance psychics with regard to structure and function similar to savants such as Kim Peek. There also seems to be tentative evidence for an increase in brain wave frequency coming into mutual step between successful 'sender/receiver' pairs.

Besides some cautious evidence of almost simultaneous ERPs between the brains of 'sender/receiver' pairs at the moment of 'sender' stimuli, there is evidence of a more pronounced ERP response to those screen images chosen later by random computer and flashed onto the screen compared to non-shown control images. This is thought to imply a non-conscious increase in presentiment of what will be experienced and is backed up by other techniques such as recording autonomic nervous system (ANS) anticipatory changes in respiration and electrical skin conductance. There is tentative evidence that right hemispheric activity, particularly in the temporal lobe and hippocampal (memory) area, is more associated with successful ESP in men, but this relationship is more ambiguous in females who tend to use their hemispheres more in tandem whatever the task. Successful microPK as in statistically significant but rather borderline deviations towards a desired increase or decrease in non random RNG noughts and ones seem associated with enhanced alpha activity. As for any neural association between episodes of poltergeistic type RSPK and individuals at the scene, there has not been much research as such occurrences are not predictable.

What, however, will really fascinate readers are the questions this research raises as to the nature of psi and Williams is to be congratulated for discussing them. Neuroscientists point out that the brain has no mechanism to send or receive nonsensory signals across space and physicists point out

that all transmission systems whether acoustic or electromagnetic lose power over increasing distance. So to claim that telepathy is equally effective between people whether they are tens of yards apart or thousands of miles apart means that something must either be fundamentally wrong with our understanding of neurophysiology and physics, or that understanding is correct and 'ESP' must for ever stand for 'Error Some Place'. Where, for example, does telepathic energy come from, let alone the psychic energy necessary to perform psycho-kinesis whether as interfering with the randomness of RNGs or claimed feats of table turning? What signal is being given off by those out-of-sight objects that clairvoyants claim to detect? What is imprinted on the objects that psychometrists hold and then claim to know about the owner? None of these claims make any sense at all within the present framework of science. Williams points out that what all these objections share in common is the idea that psi is some form of mental radio in which the brain or mind of the sender brain sends a message across space that is received and decoded by the brain or mind of the receiver when they are neurologically 'tuned in' to each other.

What, say Williams, critics do not realise is that parapsychologists do not employ concepts of A to B message transmission across space as in classical physics. On the assumption that well investigated anecdotal cases and experimental findings are valid evidence of psi, it is agreed that as they are not explainable in terms of classical physics. The eventual explanation is likely to lie in the alternative concept of nonlocality as in the entangled quantum relationship between two photons of complementary 'spin' in which the detection or changing the spin of one photon simultaneously determines the spin of the other, even if they are at opposite sides of the universe. For psi, as for those entangled photons, distance is irrelevant. It has been pointed out that, unlike sound and vision, there is no characteristic sense unique to psi, so psi has to employ whatever familiar sense or thought is most relevant to convey its meaning. Neurologically speaking, psi expression will always tend to be masked by the accompanying familiar sense. Williams does an excellent demolition job on Moulton and Kosslyn's (2008) boast that the null results of their one-off neuroimaging experiment did not 'simply fail to support the psi hypothesis: they offer strong evidence against it'. Hubris indeed!

As no message is sent from A to B in the conventional sense (although, rather confusingly, we use 'sender' and 'receiver' to distinguish their roles) then it is proposed that the information must already exist and an ESP experience,

or an experimental detection of ESP-in-action, is the result of selective ESP activation of existing information. Mutual social memory, as in sharing a common cultural stock of knowledge and imagery seems essential. Williams quotes Roll (2006) as saying that 'ESP has no experience to call its own. When ESP appears in consciousness it comes in borrowed garb. The brain has a storehouse of used apparel in the hippocampus where ESP chooses whatever fits the occasion. When the ESP target is a visual scene, the response may be a visual image or it may be an auditory expression' (p. 13). This concept is further captured by the following interesting quote from Harvey Irwin (1979) 'Suppose that by some extrasensory means you learn of the death of your friend John in a car accident some distance away. Now John has never died before, so there cannot have been a single trace in memory corresponding to John's death in his car. However.....each discrete piece of information is already contained in memory at the time of the experience: there is stored information about John, about death, and so on (p. 87). The inference is that while physically separated in space and often in time we are non-spatially related by common cultural and specific personal knowledge and its emotional meaning. In our mental reality it may be that our emotional relationship with each other, which remains the same regardless of distance apart, is our mental equivalent of quantum non-locality.

In psychometry, the emotional vividness of imagery held in the mind of the token owner seems to be picked up by the psychometrist. Williams quotes a revealing example from Pagenstecher's (1922) studies of Senora Maria Reyes de Z (Mrs Zierold) who practised psychometry under hypnosis. She was handed a piece of string that had once held the identification tag of a German soldier during World War One. Holding it 'She described a cold, foggy day on the on the frontlines of a battlefield during which she saw a bomb fall from the air and kill several soldiers'. The soldier who had worn the tag confirmed her imagery, saying he had actually witnessed the event adding 'I am certain that this was the first great impression I received of the war **possibly the greatest of all.**' (my emphasis in line with William's italics). As Williams concludes, with the 'hard problem' of the relationship between the physical processes of the brain and mental processes of mind and consciousness remaining unsolved, further research into the nature of psi, including its neurological correlates, may add clues to help solve the puzzle. Solve the one and you will solve the other. This book is an important step forward and AIPRI are to be congratulated for sponsoring this monograph and Bryan Williams

for undertaking the huge volume of research required for the writing of it.

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Behind the Veil

David Lorimer

WHAT IS CONSCIOUSNESS?

Ervin Laszlo (SMN), Jean Houston, Larry Dossey (SMN), edited by Kingsley L. Dennis

Select Books, 2016, 156 pp., \$22.95, h/b - ISBN 978-1-59079-347-3

Last year, Ervin wrote to Jean and Larry asking them to send a summary of their interpretation of consciousness. The result was much longer than he expected, as printed in this book, which I read on my way back from Italy this week. It provides a succinct account of three important perspectives on consciousness, which share a common view of transcendent oneness. Both Larry and Jean refer to an interview with Max Planck, which is worth quoting here: 'I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter is derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.' He continues by stating that there is no matter of such and that it exists only by virtue of a force bringing the particle

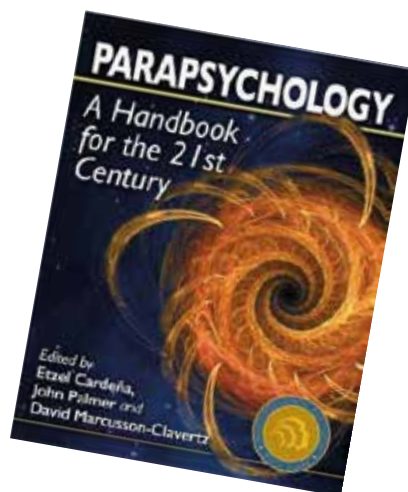
to vibration and holding it together in a minute solar system; 'we must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. The mind is the matrix of all matter.' The importance of this statement is hard to exaggerate, coming as it does from one of the pre-eminent quantum physicists of the last century after 50 years of research. As many readers will know, this sentiment can be echoed in the writings of many other physicists, as collected by Ken Wilber and more recently by Bob Jahn and Brenda Dunne. In this respect, the worldview of neuroscience lags behind, still fundamentally influenced by the mechanistic metaphor.

Jean's contribution is entitled 'Consciousness is the Quantum Field of the Cosmos' and explains her more experiential take at the four levels of physical-sensory, psychological, mythical-symbolic and spiritual-unitive. Like Ervin, she considers the hologram an important theoretical concept, seeing the universe as having an outer body and an inner mind whereby the infrastructure of the mind mirrors the structures of the universe. In terms of consciousness, this is an interdependent co-arising, so that the level of reality we are able to access depends on our state of consciousness. She quotes Deepak Chopra as saying that 'the future of God is the evolution of our own consciousness from separation to unity, from a fragmented mind to a whole mind, from thought which is in time to Awareness which is not in time.' She gives a useful exercise where we can re-edit a significant incident in our lives that did not work out as we might have hoped, thus changing our feeling of the past. This also highlights the importance of imagination in its creative sense. Another key for her his archetypes as cosmic blueprints that we can tune into.

Larry directly addresses the inadequacies of the physicalist or materialist view of mind, pointing out that how we perceive ourselves as profound social and moral implications. The dominant physicalist view is not presented as a modest hypothesis, but rather as an incontrovertible fact, in spite of the lack of evidence and the frank admission on the part of many distinguished neuroscientists that they do not know how consciousness is produced in or by the brain. They rely on what Popper and Eccles called promissory materialism, the assumption that there will eventually be an adequate materialist account of consciousness. The irony is that other theories are criticised from this standpoint, which itself has no basis other than correlation and disqualifies the proponent - why should such theories be taken seriously if they are simply a deterministic outcome of brain processes?

William James pointed out more than a century ago that the hypothesis that the brain produces consciousness cannot adequately explain anomalies such as OBEs, NDEs and survival of consciousness and that we need some form of filter or transmission theory to account for these data. In a particularly felicitous phrase, Larry states that 'empirical evidence shows that brains are separate, but minds are not', as documented in his own book *One Mind*. The real problem is the incompatibility between scientific assumptions and the reality of conscious experience. Here Larry adds two useful quotations, one from Sir Arthur Eddington and the other from David Bohm: Eddington maintained that the idea of the universal mind is a fairly plausible inference from the present state of scientific theory, while Bohm asserted that deep down the consciousness of mankind is one. Overall, this is one of the best summaries of the current state of consciousness studies that I know.

Ervin Laszlo builds on the other two contributions while referring in more detail to some of the evidence for consciousness beyond the brain. A particularly arresting example concerns a chess match, where one of the players was discarnate - he only lost after 48 moves and the medium had no specialist knowledge of chess. Ervin quotes the intriguing ostensible account relayed by Rosemary Brown about the post-mortem state of Bertrand Russell, which I also quote in my own book *Survival*. It is an eloquent statement and one of the great ironies of 20th-century philosophy if true. Ervin moves on to explain his ideas about consciousness as a nonlocal projection of a cosmic hologram, which he relates to his theory of the Akashic Field. He ends with a personal credo about living the answer in terms of being a conscious human being as an intrinsic and infinite part of a universal mind. This means that the world is not outside us and we are not outside the world: the world is in us, and we are in the world. As Plotinus put it 1700 years ago, 'we are within a reality that is also within us.' In addition, we are part of an evolutionary drive towards coherence and wholeness; and since we are expressions of the same mind, we are in a deep sense part of each other, which has significant ethical implications for the emerging society of caring and sharing. The visionary content of this book can help catalyse the shift we all need to make.



Unveiled Reality

David Lorimer

PARAPSYCHOLOGY – A Handbook for the 21st Century

Edited by Etzel Cardena, John Palmer
and David Marcusson-Clavertz

Macfarland, 2015, 414 pp., \$65, p/b –
ISBN 9-780786-489160

This comprehensive volume updates the original Handbook that was published back in 1977 - so nearly 40 years ago. During that time, more research has taken place, but we have also seen the rise of organised scepticism with continuing vigorous attempts to debunk the whole field, part of which is manifest in the control by guerrilla sceptics of the Wikipedia parapsychology pages, including the Society for Psychical Research, where readers will find that about one third of the entry is devoted to fraud. It is also interesting to reflect that the original Handbook was published only two years after Raymond Moody's *Life after Life* introducing the term near death experience. Going further back, the SPR and ASPR have been conducting systematic research since the 1880s, but one still hears the rhetorical refrain that no progress has been made in the intervening period. It is also worth remembering that the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* has been published continuously since 1994, and that the phrase a science of consciousness has become much more widespread. Also on historical note, Ed Kelly rightly observes that psychology took an immense detour through behaviourism after the death of William James, who was a scholar in philosophy and psychology as well as psychical research.

The book is structured in nine parts: basic concepts, research methods and statistical approaches, psychology and psi, biology and psi, physics and psi, psi phenomena in terms of anomalous cognition, perturbation and force, research on survival, practical applications, and finally a summary

of the volume. In all, this makes 31 chapters with extensive references after each one. It is worth noting that the use of the word anomalous relates to the predominance of scientific materialism, a framework that can make no real sense of the data presented here. Among the specific topics are macro and micro PK, meditation, drugs, quantum theory, ganzfeld, remote viewing, presentiment, distant intention, mental mediumship, reincarnation, ghosts and electronic voice phenomena, animal telepathy, and exceptional experiences in clinical psychology. This gives readers many points of entry, depending on their particular interests. In this relatively short review, I will confine myself to a few points.

The third chapter is the case against psi by Douglas Stokes, who has written widely in the field over many years. I read to his earlier books, *The Nature of Mind* from 1997 and *The Conscious Mind and the Material World* from 2007. I remember one of the main points being that there was no really adequate theory to account for psi, a point repeated here. To begin with, he remarks that many parapsychologists contend that spontaneous cases may be explained by normal processes, but he himself finds this dismissal premature. He discusses a priori scepticism, experimenter fraud with reference to science in general, data selection and the repeatability problem. In answering the question does psi exist he states: 'the pattern of experimental results is exactly what would be expected if there is no psi and quite different from the pattern that would be expected if psi exists. Fraud at rates known to occur in other disciplines is a much more parsimonious explanation of the data that is the postulation of mysterious and inexplicable psi powers.' On this basis, he concludes that psi does not exist, and, by implication, that psi-conducive experimenters must be fraudulent. The argument may be logically parsimonious, but it is contradicted by data analysed in most of the rest of the volume, and I was surprised that there was no refutation of this viewpoint in other essays apart from a brief editorial comment at the end.

However, an interesting point arises from this, namely the nature of the experimenter or sheep-goat effect where some experimenters get positive results that cannot be replicated by others. On one level, this may be explained by the prior attitude or expectation of the experimenter, as in two staring experiments on the same subjects by Marilyn Schlitz and Richard Wiseman. It turns out, though, that the third series of experiments was insignificant for both experimenters. I have often discussed this topic with Rupert Sheldrake, and we wonder if, in fact, the phenomenon is more widespread in psychological research

generally. If so, this fundamentally undermines the simple conception of scientific objectivity, which, one should also remind oneself, is in fact a form of intersubjective consensus. There is a whole chapter devoted to experimenter effects in parapsychological research where the phenomenon is divided into two hypotheses, the experimenter behaviour hypothesis where certain experimenters are better than others at putting participants at these, and the experimenter psi hypothesis where the experimenter influences the outcome of experiments by imposing their own psi. This whole area would make more sense within a participatory worldview where there is a less clear-cut distinction between subjective and objective.

The work of Ian Stevenson's carefully reviewed, as are possible explanations of the cases; Antonia Mills and Jim Tucker conclude that the evidence is now stronger than it was with Stevenson's original 1977 paper, although it is still true that mainstream psychology has not incorporated this body of data. Rupert Sheldrake provides an extensive account of natural history of psi, including the various experimental avenues he has pursued. He takes on sceptical claims, particularly by Richard Wiseman, showing that a reanalysis of his data does not lead to the conclusion stated. One interesting line of research that I had not yet read about was thinking of someone one has not seen for years then suddenly meeting that person totally unexpectedly. Rupert makes the overall point that such experiences are in fact common, natural and normal - they are only paranormal through the lens of current orthodoxy, and he is right in maintaining that the dogmas of materialism have severely inhibited research in this area.

It is clear the end of the book that there are many fruitful research questions and avenues to pursue, and indeed specific recommendations are made throughout the volume. In addition to those mentioned, more cross-cultural research could be fruitful, as the work of anthropologists like Natalie Tobert have demonstrated - an anthropological approach allows questions to be opened up in a nonthreatening manner. It would also have been good to have seen a contribution from K. Ramakrishna Rao, who integrates parapsychology into the wider tradition of Indian philosophy. The volume will stand as a landmark for many years to come, and the editors are to be congratulated on bringing it together - a real tour de force.

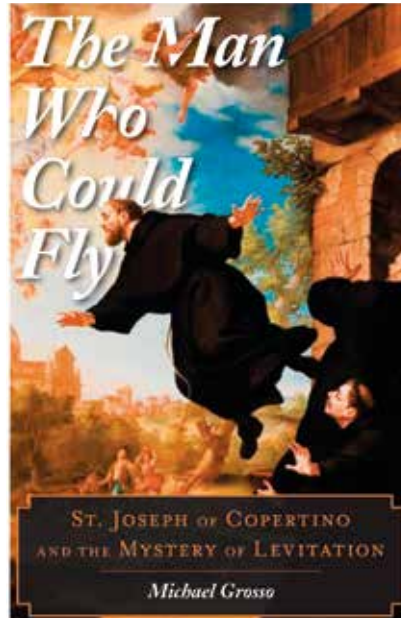
St. Joseph of Copertino and the Mystery of Levitation

Nicholas Colloff

THE MAN WHO COULD FLY

Michael Grosso

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015, 264 pp., \$24.95 - ISBN 978-1442256729



A miracle, to quote St. Augustine, "does not occur contrary to nature, but contrary to what we know of nature." So what happens when a miracle occurs, repeatedly, what can it tell us about the nature of the nature we inhabit and, more importantly perhaps, about its meaning?

This is the subject of Michael Grosso's searching, beautifully written and challenging book. The repeated miracle in question is a seventeenth century Franciscan priest's ability to levitate, not once or twice, but repeatedly over years, observed by hundreds of people, many of whom originally were sceptical. These repeat performances, accompanied by other manifestations of psychic skill, were an embarrassment to the Church not, interestingly, for their plausibility (after all St Joseph was not the first flying religious) but for the temptations of pride and self-advertisement in which Fr Joseph might become ensnared. For this reason, he was investigated more than once by the Inquisition, always being exonerated but always presenting a difficulty to the Church hierarchy who forced him into ever more remote priories until he spent the last period of his life virtually a prisoner in a single room. It is ironic or perhaps emblematic that establishments of all kinds find anomalous experience difficult (though for different reasons). This inquisitorial interest, however, is a boon to subsequent researchers given their scrupulous bureaucratic attention to detail.

Needless to say our still established scientific materialism too finds St Joseph's experience confounding so it must be a consequence of a known mechanism - mass hysteria or conscious fraud, say. Grosso patiently sifts the evidence, weighing it carefully in the balance, and leaves you with no other truly reasonable conclusion than that St Joseph could indeed, under particular and described circumstances, levitate. It would be erroneous to think of this as 'defying gravity' as Grosso argues as if the 'the laws of physics' were legislative rather than the best possible available descriptions of what can be taken to be the case. If Joseph can fly, the question now is how - what force or dynamic can act in certain contexts such that the 'normal' rules of gravity are transformed? What might that look like and how does it effect how we think about the nature we inhabit?

The first thing it asks us is to revisit is the relationship between mind and matter (and indeed whether those neatly divided categories are not grossly misleading). For Joseph's ability to levitate was connected with the achievement of certain, circumscribed patterns of ecstasy when, forgetting himself, all his concentration was on the religious trigger of his intense devotion. Our minds appear not simply to be contained epiphenomena of our material brains but causally effective. Grosso takes us through a graded ascent of those abilities - from everyday intentionality through to levitation - in order to make the case for their plausibility - differences in degree and commonality but not of kind.

If this be so, where might we go to discover what the eminent physicist and early explorer of the 'paranormal', Sir William Crookes, called, 'a psychic force' by which under certain conditions and, within as yet unknown boundaries, a person with 'a special nerve organisation' can enable action at a distance, without muscular effort shift objects or, in the case of St Joseph, levitate? Has our understanding of consciousness and matter advanced since Crookes' nineteenth century speculation grounded in observed phenomena? Yes, argues Grosso, if slowly, because with the development of quantum mechanics, consciousness has undertaken 'a return of the repressed' rather than being seen as a quirky (and limited) epiphenomena, it is becoming potentially a constitutive, structuring reality that permeates everywhere. In his penultimate chapter, Grosso explores a number of approaches to mind in quantum mechanics that are a suggestive basis for a renewed interest in consciousness as a non-local, unifying reality that transcends and configures 'matter'. We are reminded that if the world is seriously strange at the quantum level, why stop there?

If this is so, what might it mean? The final section of the book turns to what Grosso describes as a parapsychology of religion. I recall attending a science and religion conference many years ago and being embarrassed to find myself the only empiricist there. All the conversation was on whether religion and science in their most abstracted forms were or were not compatible not on the ground where they might actually meet which, as Grosso articulates, is in the space of the 'psychic' where the study of the paranormal begins to extend and deepen our understanding of human possibility.

This parapsychology of religion will not simply confirm the 'realities' confessed to by any particular religion; indeed, they might be as challenging to them as they are to 'mainstream' science, but they offer a fruitful path through the thicket of incompatible claims to the normative. In a modest yet compelling way Grosso sketches how this might be so in reinforcing the belief in a spiritual world, a belief in the power of belief itself, in the power of prayer, in a life after death and in miracles. It advances William James' request in his 'Pluralistic Universe' to put empiricism at the heart of religion once more such that, "a new era of religion as well as philosophy might begin," one that experiments after the truth, modest, wondering, humble as befits the temperament of a saint who could fly yet placed all his emphasis on the devoted, experienced love that at its heart triggered it. "The Man who could Fly" is not only an exemplary case study of a levitating saint but an agenda both for further research, search and reconfiguration of what it might mean to be human in a universe the knowledge of which remains enticingly and enjoyably uncertain, open and inviting.

A Deeper Geography

David Lorimer

THE MAP OF HEAVEN

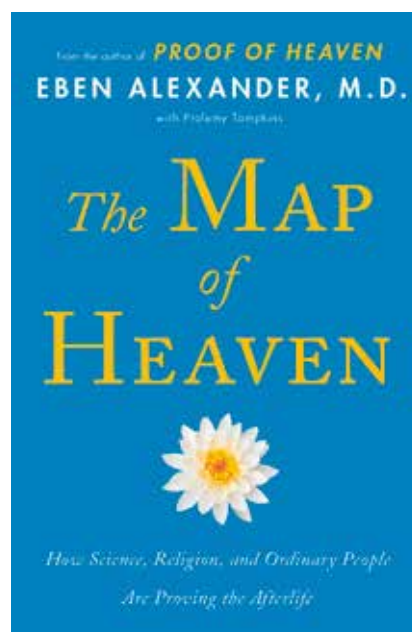
Eben Alexander with Ptolemy Tompkins

Piatkus, 2014, 165 pp., £14.99, p/b – ISBN 978-0-349-40351-9

It was a real pleasure to meet and share a platform with Eben Alexander at a conference on Infinite Consciousness in Italy last week. Many readers will recall that Eben is a neurosurgeon who had a profound near death experience recounted in his bestselling book *Proof of Heaven*, also reviewed in these pages along with the book by Anita Moorjani. This experience completely transformed his worldview and in particular his views on consciousness. He told the conference that when he met his current partner Karen Newell - see below - and she asked him about the most transformative aspect of his experience, he said 'the brain does not produce consciousness'. This was not a surprise to her, but it is a fundamental

shift for a neuroscientist, which most are unwilling to take, as Eben has discovered with the vehement reactions to his books.

This book takes the story to the next phase, incorporating as it does a great many profound letters that he has received from readers. These all point to a larger and deeper reality within which we are embedded, and of which the physical world is an aspect rather than the whole. The book is structured around seven gifts derived from his experience: knowledge, meaning, vision, strength, belonging, joy and hope. He begins by affirming the deep reality of love beyond its electrochemical manifestation in the brain. This echoes the central message of his earlier book and of many other experiences. At some point in our lives, we all ask the fundamental questions of who we are, where we came from and where we are going (p. xvii), but usually we revert to getting on with life, as my father recommended to me when I was writing my first book. Following in the footsteps of the quantum physicists of the 1930s, more people are arriving at the conclusion that consciousness is in some way fundamental rather than derivative, and must be included in any adequate theory of everything. In addition, many other phenomena currently ignored by mainstream science need to be taken into account, as this Network has been arguing for over 40 years. Eben quotes Nikola Tesla as saying that 'the day science begins to study nonphysical phenomena, it will make more progress in one decade than in all the previous centuries of its existence.'



As Michael Grosso observed in his book written during the 1980s, *The Final Choice*, NDEs represent the form of initiation corresponding more closely to the top-down philosophy of Plato rather than the bottom up of Aristotle. Initiation is a form of rebirth where we become aware of our true spiritual identity through direct experience. This immediately enlarges our sense of identity and reveals a deeper geography of human existence -

this was indeed the result of Eben's own experience. This is the knowledge of the first chapter, leading to a discussion of meaning in the second - an aspect of life denied by mainstream science with its repudiation of final causes and purpose. Eben advocates a reconciliation of the Platonic and Aristotelian methods to create a real shift in worldview based on rigorous assessment of a much wider evidence base than currently admitted. This would entail a corresponding move beyond what Blake called a single vision taking into account the transcendent perceptions reported in near death and mystical experiences that are utterly inexplicable - other than as a pathology - within the framework of materialist science. And it is important to note that these multidimensional experiences are transformative: people lead their lives on a new basis of oneness, love and wisdom. They draw conclusions similar to Eben, who writes (p. 95) that the earthly realm is where we learn lessons of unconditional love, compassion, forgiveness and acceptance.

It was good to see the experiences of Swedenborg properly appreciated both in a perceptual and a spiritual sense. A key idea is that, in the next world, we gravitate to where we belong corresponding to the amount of love we embody and have expressed in the physical world. Parallel ideas are quoted from the work of Pascal, Fechner and Goethe as well as William James and Sir Alister Hardy, whose book *The Spiritual Nature of Man* came out 30 years ago (I recently discovered that Rupert Sheldrake had had my copy for nearly as long - he found he had two!). Eben also refers to the important work going on the Division of Perceptual Studies at the University of Virginia, who have produced the volumes *Irreducible Mind* and *Beyond Physicalism* - some of the most robust studies around today.

I think Eben is right in deciding the importance of growth and evolution towards a wider and deeper sense of identity over time. As he puts it, 'the higher in the worlds you go, the deeper the part of yourself that is being called out.' From this vantage point, the physical world may seem like an illusion, but, as Aldous Huxley maintains, it is one that we must take very seriously. My experience of Karen Newell's Sacred Acoustics at last week's conference gave me a better understanding of the appendix in which this work is described. Eben discovered that he could revisit the realms of his own experience through meditation, so meditation practice becomes an important gateway and these sounds are capable of enabling a deeper state past the chatter of the brain. This bold book is an important milestone in the transformation of science towards a deeper understanding of life and consciousness.

Challenging Orthodoxy

David Furlong

THE SCIENCE OF SPIRIT POSSESSION (2nd Edition)

Dr Terence Palmer (SMN)

Cambridge Scholars, 375 pp., £52.99, h/b, (20% discount for Members) ISBN 978-1-4438-6810-5

This book, based on Palmer's Ph.D. thesis, is a scholarly and authoritative exploration into a little understood area of human experience. Palmer sets out his stall in the Introduction where he states:

'The purpose of this book is to demonstrate that, contrary to popular belief in academic circles and in the collective conscious of institutionalised mechanistic science, there is a scientific framework that can, and does, accommodate the phenomena of spirit possession in all forms and diversity' (Palmer, 2014:39).

To accept the concept that individuals can be influenced and affected, both mentally and physically, by spirit entities, leading to psychological illness, first necessitates that there is adequate scientific evidence for the continuation of consciousness beyond the death of the physical body. To support his thesis Palmer draws heavily on the work of the now little known nineteenth century researcher, Frederic Myers (1843-1901), who was one of the founders for the Society for Psychical Research. 'Myers' primary objective was to pursue scientific evidence that Man has a soul and his conscious personality survives bodily death,' states Palmer (2014:30). It is clear that Myers' exploration into these fields was limited by the understanding of his time and, although his posthumous book *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903) was well received by some of his followers, his ideas on the unconscious or 'subliminal' self, gained no acceptance within psychology or the scientific establishment. Drawing on Myer's concepts, Palmer brings us back to the central task of true scientific enquiry, which should be the open-minded exploration of all phenomena, of which perceived 'spirit-possession' is an example.

Utilising a wide variety of sources, both ancient and modern, Palmer lays the foundation for an understanding of 'spirit possession' that strongly supports the notions that separate disembodied spirit entities can access and influence the minds of individuals and, on occasions, take up residence within the psyche. This in turn can give rise to a range of psychological conditions such as schizophrenia, 'hearing voices' and similar mental health problems. We are informed how obvious cases of possession were tackled in past-times through traditional exorcisms and how

modern spirit-release therapists now approach these situations through hypnotic regression techniques, where the intrusive entity or entities are communicated with, helped and then released. Palmer also suggests methodologies for further research into this field, which is sadly ignored by the medical establishment that broadly prefers to see such conditions as stemming from neurological disorders that can best be treated by medication.

Because the book sets out to challenge the current orthodox position on the causes of mental problems, which it does more than adequately, it is full of scientific terminology and jargon that make it a potentially difficult read for the lay person and this is my main criticism of this book. However, for those interested in, or working with mental and psychological health, where a possible cause could be spirit intrusion in one form or another, it should be a must to have on the bookshelf.

David Furlong is Director of the Spirit Release Forum and author of *Illuminating the Shadow*.

ecology-futures studies**Designing Regenerative Cultures**

Daniel Christian Wahl

Ecological Activism

David Lorimer

DESIGNING REGENERATIVE CULTURES

Daniel Christian Wahl

Triarchy Press, 2016, 287 pp., £20, p/b – ISBN 978-1-909470-77-4

I am not surprised that this seminal book has been so enthusiastically endorsed by the likes of Fritjof Capra, Hazel Henderson, Joanna Macy and David Orr. If you only read one environmental book this year, this should be it. Daniel has a background in biology, holistic science, natural design and sustainability, and is

also a colleague from the International Futures Forum. His experience and study have enabled him to pull together many disciplines and strands and convert these into a readable and practical narrative with which the reader can engage deeply. One of the most interesting features of the book is the number of questions – over 250 – and the injunction that we should live these questions rather than impose answers that do not do justice to the complexity of our overall situation. The four main elements, illustrated on the cover, are transformative innovation, biologically inspired design, living systems thinking, and health and resilience.

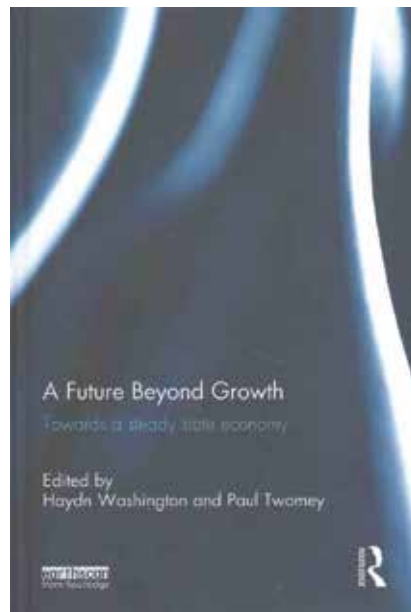
In his introduction, David Orr reminds readers that cultures are not designed from the top down, but grow organically from the bottom up, starting on a small scale as a seed initiative. On this journey, we need to begin by changing our perception of and therefore our relationship with Nature, no longer standing apart but realising that we are integral to life and co-creators of the future. All chapters also take the form of questions, with a number of subsections. We need to move from a perception and narrative of separation to what Thich Nhat Hanh calls interbeing based on relationality, cooperation and collaboration rather than rivalry and competition. Gregory Bateson is quoted as saying that 'the major problems in the world are the result of the difference between how nature works and the way people think.' Readers will emphatically agree with this statement once they have read this book as they will very clearly understand that our current economic system is structurally unsustainable, depending as it does on continuous extraction of natural resources to turn them into economic assets while externalising the ecological and social costs. (p. 210)

A key transformative theme is that of health. As pioneers like Sir Albert Howard demonstrated, the health of the soil is primary, because on it depend successively the health of plants, animals and humans. A healthy ecosystem is a resilient one, and Daniel shows how regenerative agriculture can turn depleted soil as a source of carbon to healthy soil as a carbon sink. Nothing could be more important than this kind of regenerative agriculture, as supported by a major 2013 UNCTAD report, given the impact of agriculture on ecosystems. Our own degenerative diseases are a major drain on government 'health' systems around the world, and much of this could be prevented by changes in diet – but these are unlikely to happen on a sufficient scale owing to our current agricultural and food systems. Fundamental change, as Naomi Klein also observes, will require social mass movements using all the communication power of the Internet.

We can also learn a great deal from indigenous perspectives, which Daniel sums up as a perspective where 'the world is alive and meaningful and our relationship with the rest of life is one of participation, communion and co-creation.' (p. 159) He also points out that their modes of communication involve deep listening and close community. They are no strangers to what we now call biomimicry, which poses the critical question of how humanity as a whole can become a life-enhancing presence on Earth. There is in fact much more progress in this field of applied technology than most readers will be aware of, and of which Daniel gives some interesting examples.

The design element in the title is a very important one as an enabler of cultural transformation, which will also entail a transformation of thinking through the educational system. I remember David Orr making the point in a book on eco-literacy that clever university graduates trained in old thinking are a hazard to the planet. In this respect, it is encouraging that the Scottish curriculum has as a central preoccupation learning for sustainability. Design or praxis can provide a meeting point for theory and practice, which also constitutes a learning journey with adaptive feedback. We also need to instil a biocentric ethic based on ecosystem health, including ourselves, with the adoption of ecological public health. All this involves developing new forms of literacy within the system and introducing systems thinking more generally - I only came across systems thinking through my own reading and research.

Daniel makes it very clear that regenerative cultures are rooted in cooperation. Although our crises demand a collaborative response, we are currently enmeshed in short-term and competitive systems that have resulted in a cumulative ecological overshoot. In his final chapter, Daniel gives many potential avenues for progress involving redesigning economics based on ecology, creating regenerative and circular economies, shifting from quantitative to qualitative growth, and co-creating regenerative enterprises. Consistently with his own advice, Daniel has been active in Majorca, using the very processes and questions set out in this book. I am sure he is right that we need to start on a local and small-scale, and indeed a great deal is already going on although under- or unreported. He takes to heart - and we can too - the practice of the activist May East who, after her morning meditation, consciously chooses where to put her attention that day, and which conversations and projects she will activate through the power of her attention. We can all ask ourselves how we can be the change we want to see in the world and work with others in nurturing the seeds of a new and life-enhancing culture. In this respect, Daniel has written an essential handbook.



Towards a Steady State Economy

David Lorimer

A FUTURE BEYOND GROWTH

Edited by Haydn Washington and Paul Twomey

Earthscan 2016, 256 pp., £29.99, p/b.

This book is both radical and fundamental, and is essential reading for those who want to consider in more depth the potential evolution of the global economy beyond growth and towards a steady state. William Rees sums up the importance of this evidence-based briefing by asking whether our political leaders can rise above collective denial, defy entrenched economic elites and return to serving humanity's collective interest and survival with dignity. The idea of a steady-state economy was pioneered by Herman Daly in the 1970s and must represent the eventual planetary system since the current business as usual is quite unsustainable, as any informed person already knows. The initial chapter reminds us of some 20th century figures, where human population multiplied by four, industrial pollution by 40, CO2 emissions by 17, fish catches by 35, mining ores and minerals by 27, as well as the destruction of one quarter of coral reefs, one third of mangroves and half of all wetlands. This situation continues, with our current ecological footprint equivalent to 1.5 Earths and the prospect of two-thirds of life being extinct by 2100.

In our techno-bubble, we forget our ultimate dependence on nature and ecosystem services, and that the economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of ecology. Haydn Washington identifies the key drivers of unsustainability as ecological ignorance, worldview and ideologies, overpopulation, overconsumption, the myth of endless growth and denial of our predicament.

This is exacerbated by a number of 'stupid beliefs' such as that endless growth is somehow possible, that population growth is not a problem and that technology can solve everything. The five sections deal with population, throughput and consumerism, key aspects of a steady-state economy, ethics and policy for change. We deceive ourselves if we think that these ecological realities can be evaded through intelligence and technology. The total pressure of human consumption on natural systems is excessive, and is the direct product of population and per capita consumption.

Population is discussed not only in terms of numbers of people, but also numbers of cars and other products - sometimes, as with biofuels, cars and people are in direct competition. And although there is a demographic transition going on with declining birth rates in many parts of the world, the human population is still increasing by about 80 million a year - around 220,000 every day. The decline in numbers is more than made up for by a corresponding increase in consumption. Robert Engelman proposes nine population strategies to stop short of 9 billion, with a particular emphasis on universal access to contraception, education and empowerment of women, ending policies rewarding parents for having more than two children, and integrating teaching about population, environment and development relationships into school curricula.

Eileen Crist contributes a particularly vigorous essay in criticising the wishful thinking implied in the rhetoric that we can double food production without further damage to biodiversity just through careful planning and management. She reminds the reader that the current volume of industrial agriculture, aquaculture and fishing constitute a mounting planet-wide disaster and that saying that we need to grow more food without further ecological destruction is not going to stop hungry and acquisitive people taking what they need - 'clearing more forests and grasslands, moving up slopes, overgrazing pasture and range lands, decimating sea creatures, replacing mangrove forests with shrimp operations, or killing for cash or food.' The assumption here is that the current damage inflicted by our food system is in fact acceptable.

Crist maintains that industrial food production is the most ecologically devastating enterprise on earth and that we need to consider the wisdom of limitations and humility (agricultural uses 70% of our water). It is startling to learn that cropland already uses a portion of the planet the size of South America, while land for grazing farm animals eats up an area the size of Africa. This means that humanity has effectively seized the temperate zone for agriculture 'wiping out all or most former nonhumans and

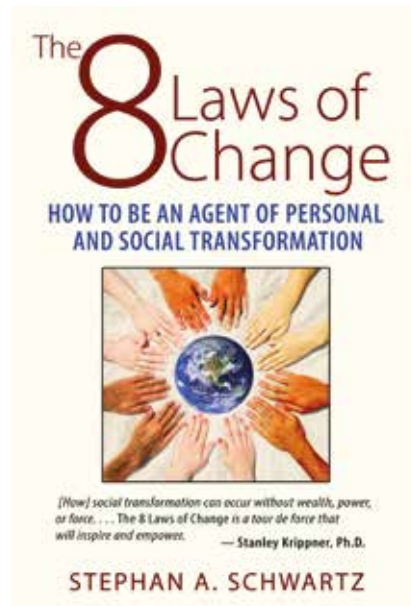
ecologies in order to mine the soil.' Species extinction is a direct result of this human activity. Moreover, industrial food production contributes 30% of anthropogenic greenhouse gases. Yet we still blithely talk about doubling food production without considering its real impact - and in terms of animals, this has to mean more concentrated animal feeding operations with their appalling treatment and serious waste issues. What kind of intensification is really sustainable and ethical?

There is a highly informative section on the steady-state economy, comparing it with the green, circular and blue economies as well as setting out a physical pathway to a steady-state economy, which, as I said above, must by definition represent the long-term human relationship with nature - currently, this demands regeneration, not simply sustainability. There is a very good critique of endless economic growth and an analysis of the systemic instability of capitalism in terms of insecurity and inequality (also that it demands unsustainable growth). Frank Stilwell contends that there is not only a tension between capital and labour, but also between capital and nature if costs are simply externalised. This all requires a fundamental rethink: 'as a society, we need to restructure the economy so that, instead of being geared for growth, it operates within environmental limits, distributes its fruit equitably and creates conditions in which people can lead more secure lives.' (p. 149) This entails replacing maximising by optimising and the urgent introduction of the Genuine Progress Indicator to replace GNP and starting to talk about a sustainable biosphere rather than sustainable development.

Geoff Mosley writes a message from the future, 2300, about the transition to steady-state economy. He says that the aims of that society are to live contentedly, sustainably and cooperatively with an emphasis on local self-sufficiency and quality-of-life. It is somewhat dispiriting, but probably realistic, to read that this transition to a steady-state economy took a long time precisely because of a focus on economic and population growth, with reliance on military force as a major method of resolving resource disputes. The response of current society, as we already know, was reactive rather than proactive, dealing with symptoms rather than the cause, and completely inadequate to the nature scale of the problem. This led to further depletion of resources, civil unrest, mass migration and escalating warfare, so that it was only in the 22nd century that things began to shift in a major way. Howard Kunstler proved prescient with his idea of the long emergency.

The central policy directions towards a steady-state economy entail limiting resource use and waste production, distributing income and wealth equitably, reforming financial and monetary

systems, changing the way we measure progress, securing full employment and changing the way business delivers value. In conclusion, the editors acknowledge that we do need targeted growth for development, but not endless global physical growth with orthodox economics and governments still in denial of ecological limits. Many governments are still actively encouraging population growth as a means towards further economic growth. Neoliberalism, with its bias towards unregulated markets, plays into the hands of multinational corporations, who are able to exert their political influence on governments through funding and lobbying so as to maintain the system in their interest. However, as this book shows, we need to think of humanity as a whole and the future of a sustainable biosphere not just in the present, but to the seventh generation. This is an essential handbook and required reading, not just for students, but for everyone with a stake in the future.



Agents of Social Transformation

David Lorimer

THE 8 LAWS OF CHANGE

Stephan Schwartz

Park Street Press, 2016, 216 pp., \$16.95, p/b - ISBN 978-1-62055-457-9

I heard Stephan speak about this book at a conference in Italy recently, and immediately asked him to have a review copy sent since his message, based on a study of around 100 initiatives, could not be more important for our time. His study and life experience (he was present at MLK's famous I have a dream speech) led him to the encouraging conclusion that 'successful, non-violent, life affirming social transformations share certain characteristics, and they are learnable.' Research over the past hundred years concluded that 'nonviolent resistance campaigns were nearly twice as likely to

achieve full or partial success as their violent counterparts.' Moreover, only 25% of these campaigns were judged a total failure, while the corresponding figure for violent campaigns was 75%. The authors of the study felt that non-violent campaigns facilitate the active participation of many more people, and, fascinatingly, were closely associated with the Quakers. Schwartz goes further by highlighting the importance of our quotidian choices in favour of the life-affirming and compassionate option, and provides a pledge for readers to take in this respect.

A key concept is what he calls beingness, which I referred to in my review of Jack Brush's book above. This is tantamount to character or spiritual substance and is witnessed in intentioned awareness. It can be expressed both positively and negatively, in Gandhi as well as Hitler; in the former case it represents an embodiment of fundamental values. The eight laws (p. 18) applied to individuals in a campaigning group are, in summary, as follows:

- They must share, individually and collectively, a common intention
- They may have goals, but not cherished outcomes
- They must accept that these goals may not be achieved in their lifetime
- They must accept that they may not get any credit or acknowledgement
- Each person in the group must enjoy fundamental equality
- They must forswear violence in word, act or thought
- They must make their private selves consistent with the public postures
- They must always act from the beingness of life-affirming integrity

Stephan discovered that successful movements have all applied these principles in some degree, and gives many examples in the rest of the book. One such comes from the records of the Nobel Peace Prize, where nearly 15% of recipients came from societies where women are traditionally thought to be powerless. It can be as simple as a vision and a mobilising capacity, for example the Irish Community of Peace People or the tree planting activity of Wangari Maathai. All these people share compassion and authenticity, and one of these anonymous recipients in 1947 was a late member of the Network, Douglas Dean - I did not know about this until reading this book, and Dean never referred to his role in his CV.

Among the examples given are Gandhi and his salt march, Greenpeace and whales and the vision of Benjamin Franklin in setting up charitable activities in his will, that have endured over 200 years. For Stephan, Franklin has exerted a structural force in his life, which

is inspiring to read about. Additional qualities required are carriage, integrity and inner resource to face down authority with truth.

The later part of the book takes a slightly different turn by discussing the background importance of nonlocal consciousness and experience of such a state implying deep interdependence and interconnectedness. Stephan proposes a new model of consciousness as causal, with individuals as part of the network of mutually influencing life that also seems to be involved in the creative process. Widespread adoption of this view is, in his opinion, essential for our planetary survival. This leads on to a discussion of the psychophysiology of politics that seems to be a stronger driver than rationality. Basic values are also critical as one advances along a continuum from tradition to conformity to security to self-direction and finally to universalism. These contrasts are exhibited a more detailed analysis of 'red' and 'blue' families (predominantly conservative and liberal) where repressive and authoritarian attitudes have a serious fallout in terms of health and quality of life.

On the other hand, there is extensive research evidence to demonstrate the power of intentioned awareness, for instance in meditation and its effects on the brain. Stephan proposes his own technique that includes choosing four words of intentioned purpose corresponding to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms. As we all know, this requires regular commitment; I liked the quote from St Teresa of Avila who recommends 'close your eyes and follow your breath to the still place that leads to the invisible path that leads you home.' He hopes that we will be able to move away from a preoccupation with profit to one on well-being, and it is here that the individual pledge can begin to make a difference. It seems that the tipping point is 10% and each one of us who makes our daily decisions based on compassionate and life-affirming choices can contribute towards that 10% shift being achieved - this book is an inspiring and encouraging pointer towards a brighter future.

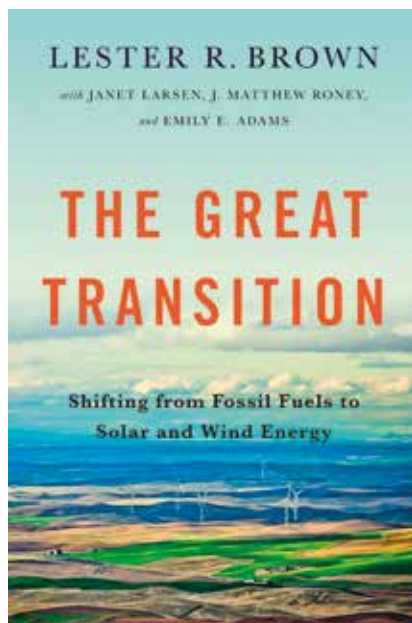
The New Energy Landscape

David Lorimer

THE GREAT TRANSITION

Lester Brown with Janet Larsen, J. Matthew Roney and Emily E. Adams

Norton 2014, 178 pp., \$16.95, p/b – ISBN 978-0-393-35055-5



Regular readers of this Review will recall that I have reviewed every major book by Lester Brown over the last 20 years, going back to his prophetic *Who Will Feed China?* and most recently his autobiography. Here he and his colleagues turned their attention to the energy transition and the emergence of a new economy powered by solar and wind energy beyond the old one fuelled by coal and oil. They draw evidence from around the world, providing a wealth of informative statistical detail. This energy transition forms part of the transition to what Brown calls an eco-economy, even in the face of fossil fuel subsidies in the order of \$600 billion annually. The speed of the process is quite striking - the authors suggest that the next decade will produce half a century's worth of change as renewable costs plummet and those of nuclear power and its disposal continue to spiral.

One significant factor is the quantity of unburnable carbon in view of CO₂ targets. In order to stay within the 2° limit we will need to limit our fossil fuel emissions to 1,400 gigatons. By 2013, we had already released 400 gigatons, leaving only 1,000 gigatons to be released between 2013 and 2050. Given that proven reserves of fossil fuels add up to 2,860 gigatons, this entails leaving 1,860 gigatons in the ground - for the companies concerned, these represent stranded assets. All these objections are beginning to have an effect on the share prices of energy companies and redirect investment towards renewables. An interesting

example of rearguard thinking is the British government commissioning of new nuclear reactors. In 2005, it was calculated that 10 generators could be built for \$3 billion each without subsidy and begin producing electricity by 2017. By the time the EU officials had approved the plan in October 2014, the number had been reduced to 2, whose cost had escalated to \$39 billion, 70% of which will have to be provided by the UK government. In addition, decommissioning the Sellafield facility is estimated to cost \$130 billion. These figures are quite staggering.

The book covers the full spectrum of energy technologies across oil, coal, natural gas, nuclear power, solar, wind, geothermal and hydropower. It also covers changing lifestyle patterns, for instance the huge increase not only in bike sales, but also in bike sharing. In the US, 21 cities had 8,500 bikes at the end of 2012, and the figure is expected to rise to 70 cities with 40,000 bikes by the end of this year. More than 700 cities in 57 countries have operational bike share programmes. One of the lesser-known energy sources is geothermal, where Iceland is the world capital, generating 29% of its electricity from the Earth. Turkey and Japan are also significant users, while China has the greatest installed capacity at 6,100 thermal megawatts - indeed China has been investing across the board in every type of energy, including coal-fired reactors. There are extensive data on hydropower, with Venezuela, Brazil and Canada leading the way in terms of percentages generated. One infrequently mentioned effect is that building reservoirs and dams can trigger seismic activity, with over 100 earthquakes worldwide linked to this cause. As we know, dams can seriously affect water allocation, none more acutely than the Nile River basin, which is home to 600 million people.

The authors maintain that the shift to renewables is being driven by a number of different key factors. Socially, there is considerable opposition to coal and nuclear power, while geologically, fossil fuels are becoming more expensive to extract. In addition, there is a trend towards localisation (also car and bike sharing) and more efficient fuel consumption as well as the development of electric cars. Governments are now encouraging renewables through subsidies and carbon taxes while also setting targets for renewables as a percentage of total electricity generation. Behind all this is the key question of whether the energy transition will proceed quickly enough for the world to avoid catastrophic climate change. The message of this book is encouraging in this respect, especially as this transition also moves humanity in the direction of a more cooperative relationship with nature.



general

What is going on in Europe?

Paul Kieniewicz

EUROPE'S MANY SOULS: Exploring Cultural Complexes and Identities

Edited by Joerg Rasche and Thomas Singer

Spring Journal Books, 2016, 435 pp.,
£23.95, p/b - ISBN: 9781935528746

Can we make any sense of the political and cultural turmoil that has engulfed Europe during the past few years: the rise of ultra right-wing movements, quasi dictatorships, ultra nationalism? Editors and commentators in the media have no shortage of theories as to what is going on. Meanwhile Joerg Rasche and Thomas Singer published this compilation of essays, where they look at each country through the lens of depth psychology. Jung often said that the forces that move nations are deeply rooted in a collective, national psyche. Most people are unaware of those forces, and end up joining political movements without understanding what makes them do it. Whereas those unconscious forces are in many cases benign – feelings of cultural or national identity for example, in other cases those unconscious forces behave as independent entities that overwhelm the consciousness of the people, with destructive consequences. Such cultural complexes, and each country has more than one, often manifest as ultra-nationalist sentiments, xenophobia, and eventually war. In 1930, Jung published a paper, “Wotan” in which he predicted the rise of Nazism, and the disaster that was to follow, based on the dreams of many of his German patients.

Let's start with the UK. Jules Cashford entitles her chapter, “Autonomy and Insularity in an Island Race.” While she does not mention the Brexit vote, her analysis of the British psyche makes it

clear why the country's separation from Europe had to happen sooner or later. Britain is an island.

This royal throne of kings, this sceptre's isle...

*This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver
sea... Shakespeare, Richard II*

Insularity pervades the thinking of Britons. They are uncomfortable with too many people of different races, who speak a different language. “Bloody foreigners!”, a typically British epithet is not commonly used in other European countries. Because the sea defines the British border, it's very clear as to who is in and who is out. Another issue not often appreciated is that until recently Britain had an empire. Its loss left a deep wound in the British psyche, resulting in a selective reading of history, a forgetting of the suffering inflicted by that empire on the natives. It's a past that British people have never come to terms with. Our attitudes towards refugees and people of other races were formed generations ago, during the heyday of the empire, and such attitudes constellated into a cultural complex, that parents still pass on to their children. It may explain why the immigration argument resonated so strongly with Brexit voters. Just as you can't argue with a complex, no logical argument could counter the assertion that *they were all coming here!*

Malgorzata Kalinowska discusses Polish cultural complexes of “The suffering hero, and messianism”. Much of Poland's present day politics can be understood in this light. Deep down, many Poles feel that they are a “chosen people”. That God has a special destiny for them, to save the world from total decadence. A common epithet among Poles for the Western World is “the rotten West”. Messianism leads to a cultural isolation, evidenced by the government's refusal to take in any refugees for fear of diluting, or diversifying Polish culture. Where a country's identity feels threatened, a complex appears, to protect the collective ego. The Suffering Hero complex, on the other hand, is a belief that Poland must suffer just as Christ suffered. Entering a Polish church one is struck by the degree to which pain and suffering are depicted. No one questions that Poland has suffered a lot – 200 years of foreign domination, World War II, German and Soviet occupation, the Holocaust, and then fifty years of communism. The complex arises because the psyche tries to make sense of historical trauma, to put a buffer between itself and the painful events. But when one is unaware of the complex, it behaves as an autonomous entity, giving rise to ultra nationalism, paranoia or xenophobia. The country's

overwhelming grief to the Smolensk air disaster, and a general refusal to accept that it was an accident rather than a conspiracy, is a typical case of how a cultural complex works.

Gert Sauer discusses a German cultural complex of superiority, the view that Germans are better organised and superior to others. Its most destructive manifestation was during WWII when the Nazis set out on a mission “to make the world a better place”. Sauer presents evidence, that the plans to colonise Eastern Europe and to create a mono-racial society by eliminating the Jews, were already being discussed before 1918, long before Hitler appeared on the political scene. Is that complex still active today? Sauer believes that it is. Mercifully it appears most often mainly in sports, the way that commentators describe their team and other teams, and in pop culture.

Russians, according to Sauer, see themselves as surrounded by threatening barbarians and respond with violence to any threat. Other countries are viewed as ready to invade “the motherland”. The collapse of the Soviet Union, losing the cold war, only exacerbated that feeling of vulnerability. Its most recent manifestation is the war with the Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea. Neither event came out of the blue, but followed political events where the West was seen by Russians as gaining a foothold in the Ukraine. When such a complex is activated, no rational argument can hold sway. Russians cannot be persuaded that a European missile shield based in Poland is not directed against Russia.

The book also discusses the history of anti-Semitism and the role of the Jewish culture in the European psyche. Jewish culture was greatly influential in Europe until World War II and the Holocaust. Its absence left a certain yearning, not to mention feelings of guilt.

Other countries discussed in depth are Greece, Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Serbia.

What about Europe's relationship to Islam? What lies behind the present day war that makes daily headlines where scores of innocent lives are claimed by a jihadist? According to Joerg Rasche, we're dealing with cultural complexes, both European and Muslim whose origin lies in hundreds of years of history, in wars of conquest and crusades. Those complexes were recently activated in the Muslim world by the West's need for cheap oil, the US support of the Saudi princes, and various wars that the West fought to secure their oil supply. Many Muslims fear the West, that western values will triumph, obliterating Muslim culture. Such fears, rooted in a cultural complex hold sway no matter what the counter-argument.

The book is scholarly, but most readable. The authors are Jungian psycho-analysts or experts in the field. A background in depth psychology is helpful to follow the authors' arguments. The book is unique, in that it offers a psychological perspective on Europe's present day situation, absent in political commentaries or in the media. Until we take into account history, and cultural complexes as outlined in this book, we are likely to only have a limited understanding of why nations behave in ways that seem to us so incomprehensible. Psychology is not the only answer, but it is certainly worth listening to.

The Age of Active Wisdom

David Lorimer

Travels With Epicurus

Daniel Klein

OneWorld, 2012, 164 pp., £7.99, p/b – ISBN 978-1-78074-412-4

Composing A Further Life

Mary Catherine Bateson

Vintage Books, 2010, \$15.95, p/b – ISBN 978-0-307-27963-7

The Divine Human

John C. Robinson

O Books, 2016, 145 pp., £9.99, p/b – ISBN 978-1-78099-236-5

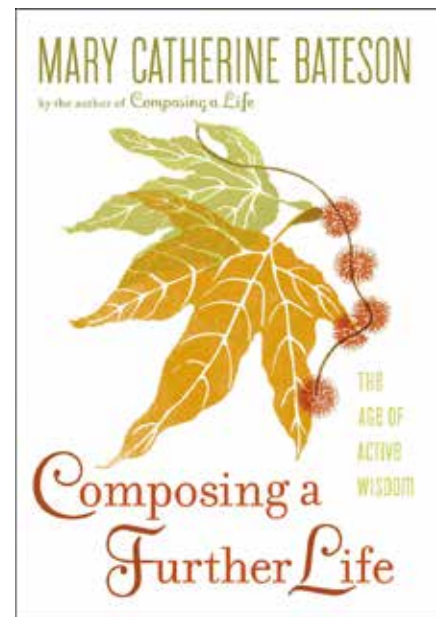
In March this year, I listened into an excellent series of interviews on conscious ageing organised by the Shift Network, in which Mary Catherine Bateson was one of the speakers. Her notion of active wisdom was resonant, especially as I was in the process of organising the conference on conscious ageing and the wisdom of elders that will take place in London in November. A few weeks earlier, I was returning from Jamaica and Iain McGilchrist lent me his copy of *Travels with Epicurus*, which is subtitled 'meditations from a Greek island on the pleasures of old age.' Daniel Klein was

already well-known as the co-author of *Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar*, and is a graduate in philosophy from Harvard. As a hippie in the 1960s, he spent the best part of a year on the Greek island of Hydra, where he returned to reflect and write this book, decades later.

In a series of evocative and charmingly written chapters, Klein draws on the philosophy of Epicurus - and indeed of many other philosophers - to consider the change of outlook implied by old age, moving on from the stress and striving of the 'forever young' outlook towards a more relaxed pace of tranquillity and contentment. The old men on Dimitri's terrace are happy to pass the time together, sometimes engaging in some light play. The difference in outlook between Greece and the Netherlands, where his wife is from, is nowhere better illustrated than in his story of getting on the wrong train and finding that the guard was prepared to phone his colleague on the train going the other way and arrange for both trains to stop, as it happened, in an apricot grove. Needless to say, this could never have happened in the Netherlands with its emphasis on punctuality.

Like the other two books, Klein distinguishes between old age and what he calls old old age of limitation, loss and frailty. In this more active phase, one is able to reflect on one's accumulated experience and find threads of meaning running through one's story. It is also a time for asking big questions, and his spiritual quest for connection is partly answered by the outlook of the third book, as well as by his references to William James, as I will explain below. Epicurus's philosophy of death corresponds to the orthodoxy of modern science, but his conclusions about how to live life make for a certain contentment and enjoyment in the present. Whatever life has in store, it is always good advice to live mindfully and perhaps recall this quotation from Epicurus: "not what we have, but what we enjoy, constitutes our abundance."

Mary Catherine Bateson introduces a new stage into the Erikson cycle of life by adding what she calls Adulthood II as the stage of active wisdom in which we have to reinvent ourselves if we are not content with spending our time on golf, travel and bridge. Her metaphor of composing a further life combines planning with improvisation, and this period endowed with health and energy can combine wisdom with activity for the common good. She suggests that, around retirement age, we are faced once more with three crises: of identity, intimacy and generativity. Many people begin with travel, but this just provides an interlude in which to readjust. As we reflect on our lives and their trajectory, she invites us to affirm our own life, affirm our own death and affirm love, both given and received (p. 90). She suggests that we should approach death with a sense of acceptance and trust, clearing both

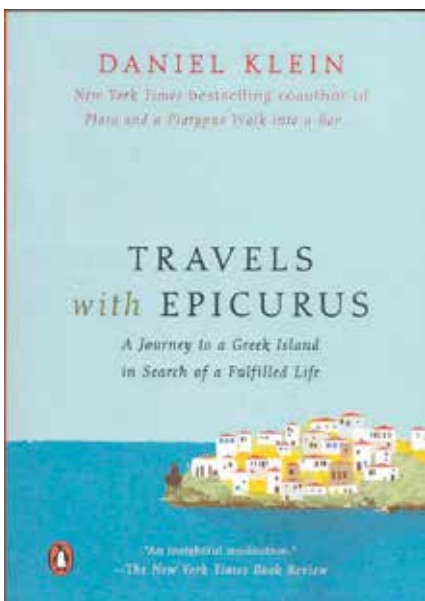


our attics and our consciences. Affirming love involves repairing relationships and building new ones. She asks: 'Am I still person I have spent a lifetime becoming, and do I still want to be that person? How can I affirm that identity and yet accept the knowledge that I will die?' These are profound and important questions.

Another theme running through the book is that of interdependence and mutual care. She sees independence as an (somewhat masculine) illusion, a point which is at its clearest in infancy and extreme old age. She observes that we will eventually have to entrust ourselves to the care of others, and more and more trust will be called for. This is why she adds the quality of humility as a basic strength of old age, 'which often strips us of whatever has made us feel valuable and lovable'. However, we can discover that 'we are loved by God and by our families beyond the loss of those traits we value in ourselves and even beyond the point of active contribution.' This can be a hard lesson, but it is a beautiful one and allows others to give while we take our turn to receive.

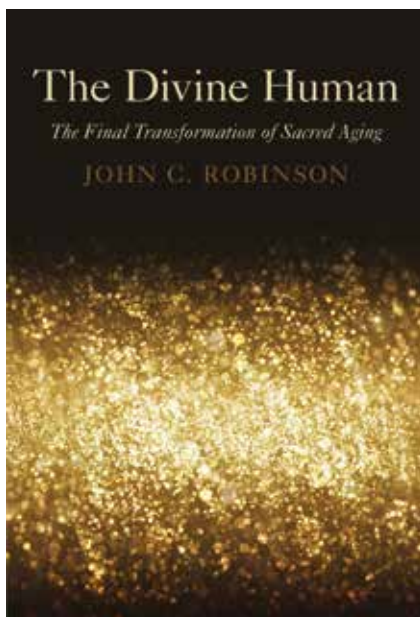
The book is interwoven with a series of extensive interviews, including with James Morton and Jane Fonda, in which the central themes of the book and this stage of active wisdom are explored. Fonda observes that the vertical spiritual dimension becomes more important than the horizontal as we also begin to consider our legacy. Here it is a question of wholeness and a sense of completion by attaining a degree of peace, and it is interesting to learn in this connection that the Hebrew word *shalom*, meaning peace, has the same root as the word *shalem*, which means complete. We have an opportunity to become more truly ourselves and to be able to say 'this is who I am and what I stand for.'

The third book is about the final transformation of ageing, by a psychologist and minister who has



written extensively on the topic. For him, ageing is enlightenment in slow motion as we have the chance to dissolve the false self, find a new centre and realise that this is the Divine Human. At this stage, it is no longer a question of heroic doing, but rather the stillness of being. Robinson's premises are that all consciousness is God's consciousness, all being is God's being, that conscious being is unity with God, that the divine self lives in the depths of conscious being and hence that Conscious Being is the Divine Human. The practices in the book teach readers how to stop thought and remove the conceptual wall of separation so that one can realise the depth of I Am as what God is. As with the other books, there is a theme of emptying and falling away, but this very emptying makes space for the divine to emerge consciously. We can learn to experience inner space as divine consciousness. I very much enjoyed the author's transformation of the famous Einstein equation where E stands for the divine energy of love, m/mass for being and c for consciousness in the sense of being conscious of consciousness. Hence love = being-consciousness². For him, love is both a feeling, a force and a practice, as well as the medium of our transformation as we become a spiritually ripened Elder, full of sweetness, like the delicious plums I have been eating off the trees over the last few days.

These three books provide complementary views on this same process of spiritual maturation and highlight the opportunity for active wisdom and for becoming more truly ourselves. Readers will engage with them differently, according to their own viewpoint and experience, and I for one have gained much from this reflection, which I commend to you.



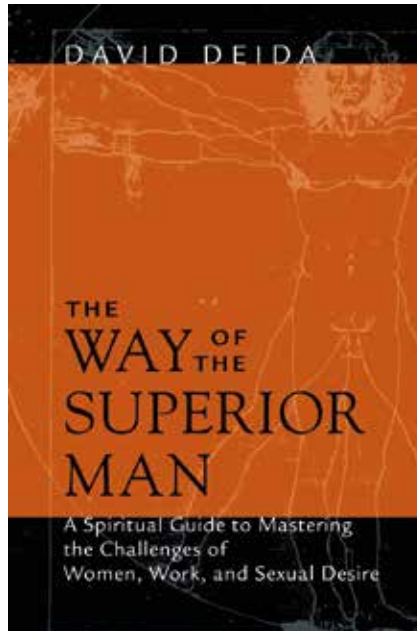
The Art of Loving

David Lorimer

THE WAY OF THE SUPERIOR MAN

David Deida

Sounds True, 2004, 201 pp., \$17.95, p/b.



The interface between spirituality and sexuality is a road less travelled in Western culture. While Indian and Chinese civilisation have long traditions in this respect through Tantra and Taoism, the West finds it a challenging area but one that is currently being re-envisioned by a number of pioneers. More widely, our relationship to sexuality mirrors that towards the body, the feminine and Nature. The evolution of our thinking is brilliantly documented in Riane Eisler's masterly work *Sacred Pleasure*, which extends her discussion of the dominator and partnership models of society described in *The Chalice and the Blade*. Other spiritual teachers who have written seriously in this area are Osho, Barry Long, Adi Da and Dieter Duham, whose book *Terra Nova* I reviewed in a previous issue.

David Deida is the author of a number of books on sacred sexuality, including *Intimate Communion* and the corresponding book for women, *Dear Lover*. It would be misleading, however, to give the impression that this book is limited to spirituality and sexuality. Rather, it is a spiritual guide to mastering the challenges of women, work and sexual desire, to living the masculine life freely and to the full. The eight parts cover a man's way, dealing with women, working with polarity and energy, your dark side, feminine attractiveness, bodily practices and men and women's yoga of intimacy. Since the 1960s, men have been encouraged to embrace the feminine and women the masculine, but this has had a fallout in terms of the evolution of our intimate relationships which can

easily become a 50-50 situation where there is a loss of masculine and feminine polarity between partners and therefore a kind of neutrality in the relationship. For Deida, the masculine and feminine poles represent the quest for freedom and love respectively, but a man's mission nevertheless remains central to his life. He encourages men to commit themselves beyond fear, giving their gifts both to the world and to their woman. This means they will be fully alive, open and present, in touch with their deepest desire also represented in their purpose.

Deida is very good advice for men who have trouble dealing with the emotions of their partners and their immediate expressions of feeling. This is where men can open their own hearts to love rather than try to fix the woman: 'penetrating her closure with your fearless presence,' praising and appreciating her rather than expecting her to change. Each serves the other in growth and love. He suggests that 'the best way you can serve your woman is by helping her to surrender, to trust the force of love, so that she can open her heart, be the love that she is, and give this love which naturally overflows from her happiness.' None of this involves analysing blocks. Men need to remain strong and stable in their presence, maintaining full consciousness in all situations and remaining in masculine clarity and decisiveness so that she can relax and trust. Ultimately, Deida argues, the search for love and freedom is the same destination of the unbounded and infinite ground of being that we are.

This involves letting go of boundaries, loving with abandon and dissolving in the immense force of loving that corresponds to the death or transcendence of ego. By dying into love, there is no need to hold onto yourself. This is perhaps the deepest insight of the book, feeling your partner while unobstructedly extending your love beyond yourself. This is what he calls intimate communion or deep oneness, which is also our 'ultimate desire for the union of consciousness with its own luminosity.' The consciousness of the masculine matches the energy of the feminine, power and trust meet in devotional surrender to divine love through the body. I was also struck by Deida's remarks on the correspondence between radiance and beauty, which is an expression of life itself where the woman is open, trusting, connected and loving.

One should not have to wait until later life before absorbing the essential insights of this book, and it is significant that prominent women writers like Marianne Williamson, Mariana Caplan and Marci Shimoff have also endorsed the book along with Tony Robbins and Ken Wilber. Deida helps men to understand women much better while also helping them understand themselves and their potential for real integration and intimacy.



books in brief

David Lorimer

Note: many of these books are now available in downloadable electronic form

SCIENCE/PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

I, Superorganism

Jon Turney

Icon Books 2016, 314 pp., £8.99, p/b.

Many advances in science arise from a newly realised complexity in the functioning of living systems. This applies to this very good popular account of the human microbiome - the huge internal population of microorganisms that contribute to digesting our food, making essential vitamins, breaking down toxins, metabolising drugs and influencing our hormones and immune system. The field is interdisciplinary, involving such experts as molecular geneticists, microbial ecologists, infectious disease specialists and immunologists. The book answers the question of what it means to be a superorganism and tells the story of this emerging field. Advances in DNA sequencing have played an important role and the Human Microbiome Project is a natural successor to the Human Genome Project.

Perhaps the most important activity takes place in the gut where the number of organisms would require a ladle while for the rest of the body combined, a teaspoon would suffice. Scientists are having to go beyond the war metaphor of the innate immune system in discussions of the adaptive immune system, suggesting a co-evolutionary process with shifting populations of microbiota related to our diets. Turney also refers to the network of nervous system connections between the gut and the brain. In terms of general advice, he follows Michael Pollan in recommending 'eat food, not too much, mostly plants', adding that fermented food is useful - it is good to remember that we are a habitat for a large array of other species. It is clear that this field is an important development in systems biology and reinforces the significance of cooperation along with competition.

Restless Creatures

Matt Wilkinson

Icon Books 2016, 298 pp., £20, p/b.

This brilliantly written and engaging book tells the story of evolution through locomotion, opening up a new perspective and relating this to the extraordinary capacities of our bodies, which we take for granted. Getting from place to place is critical for both survival and reproduction and enables the application of selective pressures. The fitness of an organism in relation to its environment depends on both form and behaviour in their mutual adaptation. Propulsion interweaves with natural selection in a long series of steps described in the various chapters of this book. This includes the origin of bipedalism, flight, underwater wriggling in relation to the development of vertebrates, the unlikely exodus from the sea and the development of our mental faculties related to movement. The author also invites the reader to conduct a number of thought experiments that make one more aware of the complexities of movements, adjustments and dynamic decision-making. We realise the influence of our ancestors' wanderings on our own living embodiment - an expression of the dance of life.

Being as Communion

William A. Dembski

Ashgate 2014, 218 pp., £17.99, p/b

Bill Dembski is a mathematician and philosopher who is well known for his contributions to intelligent design theory. In this profound study, he provides a metaphysics of information to replace the metaphysics of matter with a more intelligible model. His treatment is detailed and analytical, covering a wide range of themes and a large context. Information implies the primacy of mind and the importance of communion as it passes between organisms. Information also implies a source of intelligence in the widest sense. As he puts it: 'to exist is to be in communion, and to be in communion is to exchange information' - hence the fundamental science 'is a theory of communication rather than an atomistic, reductionistic and mechanistic science of particles and other mindless entities.' This view also suggests a relational and holistic perspective, and while matter entails a bottom-up approach, information is top-down, emerging from a matrix of possibilities. Within this context, intelligent design is the study of patterns and the uncovering of real teleology, which is anathema to scientific materialism.

Philosophically, Dembski regards matter as an abstraction, and within his own view it becomes a medium for dynamic information. Materialism assumes both causal and informational closure, so that only material causes (and energies) can be admitted. He makes a good case for chance as a probabilistic by-product of intelligence rather than mere contingency. Materialists also have to regard consciousness, intelligence and beauty as epiphenomena of matter, and the author shows how hard it is to square the powers attributed to natural selection with the real evolution of information and complexity. For him, intelligence is a causal and creative power, while there is no creativity in natural selection. He criticises the Dawkins weasel algorithm as inherent in the intelligent programmer as the target is specified. This is consistent with his overall argument that intelligence is the ultimate source of information, and in his case that this corresponds to Christian theism. So we finish up with an informational realism where information is the primary stuff of reality and is relational. This view provides a wider and deeper context than scientific materialism. Intriguingly, the author finishes up with a golf analogy where, if God were playing, (S)he would still be subject to certain constraints in terms of rules, hence limiting supernatural powers. This is an important and satisfying philosophical statement promoting a coherent metaphysics of information rather than matter.

The Age of EM

Robin Hanson

Oxford 2016, 426 pp., £20, h/b.

This book is an interdisciplinary thought experiment by an author trained in physics and philosophy, who is now a professor of economics. He envisages in detail a future when robots rule the world and brain emulation (EM) is widespread - this involves scanning a brain to record its cell features and connections then building a computer model that processes signals in the same way and is embodied on a small scale. Some readers may stop right there, since there is an underlying

assumption that brain equals mind (especially in signalling terms) and that all this can be uploaded and expressed on a computer programme. There is no doubt that robots in various forms will gradually displace more and more human activities, but the interest of this book is, as I mentioned at the beginning, as a thought experiment. In a historical sense, the author believes that we are becoming maladaptive as people in more economically developed cultures fail to reproduce in sufficient numbers. In addition, the author speculates that our social systems will fail to prevent what we might currently consider lamentable outcomes. The six parts deal with basics, physics, economics, organisation, sociology and implications. EMs are psychologically similar to ourselves so they have some of the same challenges - and when they begin to wear out, they are allowed to process at a slower speed (sounds familiar?). The sheer amount of detail in the book really allows readers to engage with these scenarios and reflect back on our current situation.

MEDICINE-HEALTH

The Healing Effects of Energy Medicine

Shannon McRae PhD with Scott E. Miners

Quest Books 2015, 233 pp., \$18.95, p/b.

Subtitled 'memoirs of a medical intuitive' and with a foreword by Bernie Siegel, this book makes fascinating reading, especially for those in the healing professions, with its detailed case histories outlining the modalities of healing in specific instances. Shannon was born in 1938, and her medical intuitive faculties go back to her childhood where her mother and very little faith in her abilities, criticising her, for instance, for colouring outside the body when she was in fact filling in the aura she was seeing. Both Bernie and Scott have first-hand experience of Shannon, who was able to see Bernie's guides as well as heal his leg.

The book is arranged in a series of case histories illustrating more general principles. Shannon explains how healing can happen easily when we let go of resistance, which may involve forgiveness, surrender, acceptance and allowing. She sees stress as the main underlying component of dis-ease, hence the power of changing one's thought patterns and letting go of the past. The cases also show how commitment is required on both sides, leading to a state of coherence and alignment. Our negative thoughts and judgements can block the flow of energy and well-being in our systems, as many case histories show. Some are quite dramatic, for instance the healing of a brain aneurysm from a distance, where Shannon feels herself into the tiny lesion in the brain and gathers the necessary healthy cells to initiate healing. Sometimes, apparent accidents are self-inflicted and require a deep process of forgiving oneself and others. Towards the end of the book, Shannon also describes encounters with deceased relatives and the perception of a man leaving his body at 45° and being greeted by his parents on the other side. Altogether, the book provides yet another coherent narrative of how the physical world is embedded in a much larger reality than currently acknowledged by orthodox medicine.

Sustainable Medicine

Dr Sarah Myhill

Hammersmith Books 2016, 339 pp., £8.99, p/b (special offer)

Drawing on her clinical experience of over 30 years, the author conveys her understanding of both sustainable and unsustainable medicine. Conventional medicine, informed by a pharmaceutical, symptom-suppressing perspective, does not address the real underlying causes of ill-health, but rather treats the symptoms and in doing so can make the condition worse than before – for instance, giving painkillers that may actually hasten the need for an operation as joints are damaged faster. The author regards medical education as a brainwashing process that turns caring teenagers into

unquestioning, narrow-minded, one size fits all doctors. She points out that some terms like high blood pressure are descriptions of symptoms rather than a true diagnosis. The pervasive influence of Western science and global food companies means that increasing numbers of people will become susceptible to degenerative conditions or lifestyle diseases. The author reminds us that in both the US and Europe - see also the review below – healthcare-system induced deaths are the third leading cause after heart disease and cancer.

The book is very clearly structured, starting with symptoms as early warning systems then analysing the mechanisms whereby symptoms and diseases are produced, with a particular emphasis on metabolic syndrome, which is characteristic of so many chronic conditions. Underlying her overall approach is what she calls the basic package that we should be applying all the time and consisting of a paleo diet (low on carbohydrates and sugar, including fruit), supplementary minerals and essential fatty acids, good sleep, exercise, sunshine, reduction of chemical burden, emotional security and avoidance of infections. She then describes extra treatments for specific conditions and gives a number of fascinating case histories. From the point of view of conventional practice, this whistleblowing book is revolutionary, but is in fact applied common sense from a naturopathic point of view. Given the financial crisis of health systems around the world, a more preventative approach will become a necessity. In the meantime, this book can help readers heal themselves and maintain their health by addressing underlying causes.

Evolution to Devolution

Karl Elliot-Gough

Earth Books 2016, 370 pp., \$29.95, p/b.

The author of this book has spent nine years researching the rise of the diseases of civilisation, which he characterises as the seven deadly whites; these are sugar, milk, flour, fats/oils, salt, rice and finally white lies. He sympathetically quotes Rousseau in his last chapter as saying 'the greater part of our ills are of our own making, and we might have avoided them, nearly all, by adhering to that simple manner of life that nature prescribed.' In a nutritional sense, so-called advanced societies have radically departed from a natural way of eating as researched in depth by Weston Price over 80 years ago. Similar research was carried out in India by Sir Robert McCarrison, who demonstrated the adverse effect on rats of refined flour, sugar and rice. As it happens, this research is not mentioned here although it does reinforce the argument.

The underlying thesis is that we need to restore the natural order of *oikonomia* that has been distorted by commercial interests in food and agriculture, who control not only the current system but also governments and institutions with their financial clout. 80% of deaths in the industrialised world are due to heart disease, cancer and iatrogeny, that is medical interventions, while 80% of the modern diet is made up of these six deadly food whites, both in terms of weight and calorie content. The effects of the modern diet can be seen all over the world, but more especially in China and India as the population adopts Western practices. Each chapter gives a history of the white in question, highlighting scientific research that has been largely ignored; one example is the work on sugar of John Yudkin, which has only recently been highlighted although he wrote the book in the early 1970s and became the sugar industry's number one enemy.

The book is written in an informal, if at times laborious style with a few grammatical issues such as 'bare' rather than 'bear' with me. It is clearly well researched, but the fact that it is not properly referenced does somewhat undermine its authority – there are no notes and the bibliography is not alphabetical. However, this does not detract from the main message of the book, with which I entirely agree. Having spent over 300 pages on diagnosis, the conclusions indicate that we

should reconnect with the planet, regenerate our soil, change the distribution of farm produce and adopt a natural diet based on the 50 key nutrients that he lists - avoiding processed foods. Such a revolution would have dramatic medium-term effects on our health service whose costs are spiralling out of control.

Science for Life

Brian Clegg

Icon Books 2016, 400 pp., £9.99, p/b.

Subtitled 'a manual for better living', this handbook consists of a large number of short entries, many cross-referenced, under the overall headings of diet, exercise, brain, psychology, health, environment and fun. It is based on extensive research, using the definition of science as providing the best current agreed position, given the data we have at the moment. The book can therefore be consulted on a huge variety of topics, and contains a lot of good practical advice. The organically-inclined reader, however, will find much to argue with under topics such as GM foods, vaccinations, homeopathy and chiropractic - where the main reference is work by quackbusters Simon Singh and Edzard Ernst. In the last section on 'fun' we are told that crop circles were entirely explained by Doug and Dave in 1991 and that the scientific consensus is that ghosts do not exist - 'there is very little good evidence for them' and they are best explained by a combination of imagination, hallucination and fakery. This not only shows the author's ignorance but also prejudice, which is apparent in a number of such entries. So readers will need to exercise some discrimination in consulting the book, although many entries are quite straightforward and uncontroversial.

What is Sound Healing?

Lyz Cooper

Watkins 2016, 139 pp., £7.99, h/b.

This is another excellent little book in the What Is series, providing a succinct introduction to the topic. Sound has many therapeutic qualities as well as helping us become more self-aware and present in the moment. The book begins by explaining the nature of sound and healing before moving on to discussing how sound healing works as well as providing exercises and case histories. The book is arranged around a 5R model consisting of resonance, resistance, responsibility, reflection and release (p. 65). Resonance and resistance represent positive and negative thoughts. The author also discusses sound and healing in other cultures, ancient and modern. In all cases, sound helps induce state of consciousness enabling us to gain the insight to transform our health and well-being as part of a vibrational universe.

Genomics and Personalised Medicine

Michael Snyder

Oxford 2016, 166 pp., \$16.95, p/b.

The author is a professor of genetics at Stanford, and used his own gene sequence to predict and help diagnose a metabolic disorder in 2012. This book is a thorough primer to the whole area with subheadings consisting of questions. It covers the basics of the genome, cancer biology and treatment, the nature of complex genetic diseases, pharmaco-genomics, genomics for the healthy person and the advisability of prenatal testing, the importance of the microbiota and the immune system, as well as issues of information and ethics. It forecasts a world in which we will be able to use an app to obtain personalised recommendations about food and lifestyle. In this sense, the ultimate responsibility is seen to shift to the individual. However, the undercurrent of reasoning is still somewhat deterministic, for instance in the use of the term environment, and we now know from epigenetic studies that our lifestyle choices actually influence gene expression. In addition, it is not clear from the text that genetically transmitted diseases form a very small proportion of the whole. However, in the future we certainly will have a great deal more information about our predispositions and therefore have a sound basis for medically related decisions, although much lifestyle advice is in fact generalisable rather than personal.

Green Exercise

Edited by Jo Barton, Rachel Bragg, Carly Wood and Jules Pretty

Earthscan 2016, 211 pp., £29.99, p/b.

As the title suggests, this book is about linking nature, health and well-being. Readers will be amazed at the wealth of references backing up what is basically common sense, that being in nature and exercising - such as walking - is good for mental and physical well-being. However, with our evidence-based policy-making, this volume provides a huge amount of valuable background, and is all the more relevant with increased emphasis on well-being suggesting a redefinition of prosperity to include the important factors discussed in this book. A dose of nature can elicit a positive response depending on the length of exposure, as many references show. Mood is discussed in terms of attention restoration theory, while there are many lessons to be learned from nature about the design of health buildings. We not only have green exercise, but also blue exercise associated with water and coastlines. Then there is Japanese forest bathing, which includes the scent from pine trees as well as the soothing sound of river water. In addition, nature can be involved in therapeutic interventions such as care farms and wilderness expeditions for youth at risk. Our increasingly sedentary lifestyle demands facilities for green exercise in the workplace context. The overall picture emerges in the benefits of greener and healthier economies with an emphasis on ecological public health, environmentally sustainable consumption and sustainable behaviours involving green exercise.

Crowdsourced Health

Elad Yom-Tov

MIT Press 2016, 144 pp., £18.95, h/b.

The title tells the story of this book - of how massive online data can be harnessed to improve healthcare through large-scale collection and collation of searches by specific groups of patients. One example is searches by cancer patients where it is possible to achieve a better understanding of their information needs, all the more so with the correspondence between the searches and off-line behaviour. Apparently, we all make between five and eight searches a day, which generates a massive amount of data that can be harvested without necessarily invading privacy - a fine line, as readers will know. It seems that about 40% of people arrive at a correct diagnosis of their condition through Internet searches while other conditions such as anorexia can provide a supportive online community. Another interesting aspect in the chapter about disease and information is the replication of the five stages of grief from Kubler Ross after diagnosis with a serious health issue. There is no doubt that this new avenue of research can support public health objectives.

PHILOSOPHY-SPIRITUALITY

The Penultimate Curiosity

Roger Wagner and Andrew Briggs

Oxford 2016, 468 pp., £25, h/b.

This magisterial and beautifully illustrated book is a cooperation between the religious painter Roger Wagner and the physicist and theologian Andrew Briggs. If the ultimate curiosity refers to the question why beyond the visible universe, then the penultimate curiosity of the title investigates the physical world and the question how, the traditional role of science. The thesis of the book is that science swims in the slipstream of ultimate questions that are spiritual in nature. The prologue sets the scene by explaining how a spiritual as well as scientific quest is implied in sculptures and inscriptions on the Oxford Science Museum and the original Cavendish Laboratory in the centre of Cambridge. In this sense, it is instructive to learn that, for mediaeval thinkers, *religio* referred to interior acts of devotion, while *scientia* was considered a habit of mind or intellectual virtue. As such,

there is no inherent conflict, even though the conflict thesis has been dominant in the relationship between science and religion, especially in an intellectual sense since the 19th century. More recent work has been informed by CSR - the cognitive science of religion drawing on a number of fields.

The authors guide the reader through the whole history of the relationship between science and religion, going right back to cave art. This includes the history of Greek philosophy, the role of Alexandria, the work of Arab scholars including one I did not know called Ibn al-Haytham, who suggests that truths are immersed in uncertainties, and that scholars should test everything, accepting nothing on authority. Then we have the founding of the universities, Roger Bacon, Galileo, Kepler, Francis Bacon, Newton, Leibniz and Pascal. In the 19th century, there is an enormous expansion of intellectual horizons, not only in science, but also in biblical criticism and anthropology. Throughout all this, the concept of a transcendent unity underlying the physical universe remains present, even if scientific materialism has tried to dispense with it. People will continue to put both sides of the argument in relation to the evidence they are considering, for instance the contrast between Stephen Jay Gould and Simon Conway Morris. Yet, the 'ultimate metaphysical curiosity is rooted in the human need to make sense of the world as a whole' (p. 411). This can be seen in role of mathematics, concepts of law and order and the pursuit of truth through investigation and experiment. By the end of the book, the reader has an appreciation of the different and evolving forms of thought that cultures have used as an expression of both ultimate and and penultimate curiosity.

More Than Allegory

Bernardo Kastrup

iff books (John Hunt) 2016, 254 pp., £12.99, p/b.

Previous books by Bernardo Kastrup have provided a scathing critique of scientific materialism and a strong advocacy of a worldview based on the primacy of consciousness. This book addresses the relative status of religious myth, truth and belief in relation to each other in a rigorous way. The overall thrust is that the universe is becoming self-aware through us, but we are misled by our current consensus reality that there is a real world outside consciousness. Myths are in fact a means of embodying transcendent truth and not just to be taken allegorically. Their significance can be apprehended intuitively. The author's experience of the cross in Cologne Cathedral revealed to him the transcendent truth of this Christian symbol so that he experienced it for himself. In a spiritual sense, the quest for truth is also a quest for inner peace. In the process, not only the ego but also the notion of truth itself need to be deconstructed while we come to the realisation that past and future are both constructs and, given the primacy of consciousness, truth is inherently subjective, even though it can be shared in terms of perceptions, explanations and predictions. All this, according to Kastrup's perspective, takes place within Mind at large. The third part on belief takes the form of a story/dialogue exploring the themes in more depth as lenses that define our perceptual possibilities. This leads to an interesting discussion of death as a transition from observing the universe to being the universe, from dreaming to conceiving, reflecting another aspect of Mind at large. All this is within the Divine imagination. We become aware of non-separation and thus achieve liberation. A subtle exploration of reality as we know it.

Moving Toward Global Compassion

Paul Ekman

Paul Ekman Group 2014, 109 pp., no price given, p/b – www.paulekman.com

Paul Ekman is the world's foremost expert on facial expressions and is a psychologist at the University of California in San Francisco. In some ways, this book builds on the concept of the global ethic formulated for the centenary of the World Parliament of Religions in 1993. It also reflects

a profound engagement with Buddhism and dialogues with the Dalai Lama. It begins by asking if global compassion is achievable, making an important distinction between two different types of compassion: proximal in relation to someone in the moment, and distal, which is aimed at avoiding suffering in the future. The expression of global compassion reflects our global interconnectedness and interdependence, but lags a long way behind except in expressions following a global emergency. Ekman analyses the immediate benefits of compassion in terms of impassioned joy based on a resonant emotional recognition similar to my own concept of empathetic resonance. We can gradually expand our compassion from familiars to strangers and even heroic interventions to save the life of another. The development of a calm mind is also important, emphasised in conversation with the Dalai Lama towards the end of the book. He also stresses the importance of detachment and spiritual practice as well as questioning our motivation. An important contribution to the field.

Change your Thoughts, Change your Life

Wayne Dyer

Hay House 2007, 392 pp., £12.99, p/b.

This book of reflections on the *Tao Te Ching* is a must-read for all familiar with the Tao and a wonderful introduction for those from have not yet read it. Wayne Dyer spent a year living with the text and has produced series of 81 essays arising out of each short chapter, the translation of which is a composite from many editions. As advised, I read only one chapter a day over a period of months, allowing the simple and profound message of harmony with Nature to permeate my thoughts and being as well as informing the quality of my actions. The teaching is paradoxical and as applicable now as it was 2,500 years ago. Each chapter opens with the translation, and Wayne highlights some key messages in his reflections as well as advising the reader on how to practise the Tao in the light of the insights. It is about living impartially, creatively, in the flow, without attachment, without striving, calmly, simply, softly and peacefully. The sage allows rather than interferes, knows when to act and when to refrain from action, understands the rhythms of life knows when to let go and surrender. As the text reminds us:

*My teachings are very easy to understand
And very easy to practise;
yet so few in this world understand,
and so few are able to practise.*

Erasmus of Christendom

Roland H. Bainton

Hendrickson 2016 (1969), 355 pp., £12.99, h/b.

This is a welcome republication of a classic biography of Erasmus (1466-1536), who was one of the most sought-after advisers of his age to Kings, Cardinals and Popes. He must have been the most widely read man of letters of his day, and was continuously translating classical and other authors as well as producing a definitive first printed edition of the New Testament in Greek in 1516. The book explains how peripatetic his life was, with periods in London, Basel, Rotterdam, Paris, Rome, Cambridge and many other European cities. He was a close friend of both John Colet and Sir Thomas More, to whom his best known work, *In Praise of Folly*, was dedicated. I learned that he produced a number of editions of his book *Adagia* – a collection of proverbs that grew from 800 to 5,000. His role in relation to Luther is carefully discussed and one can see how he tries to steer a middle way on reform of the Church. It seems that he took a particular dislike to Pope Julius, and there is an excellent and witty dialogue as Julius is refused entry to heaven by Peter. It is also striking how he insists on a practical demonstration of the ethics of Jesus rather than relying on faith alone. We could well follow his advice of listening to both sides with open ears and refusing to serve any faction.

How to Understand your Bible

Manly P. Hall

White Crow Books 2016 (1942), 163 pp., £14.99, p/b.

As a distinguished scholar of esotericism and the ancient wisdom, Manly Hall sees Scriptures as fragmentary expressions of Eternal Law that have to be understood as a whole and therefore cross-referenced to other philosophies and religions. Here he takes key themes and passages from both the Old and New Testaments and interprets them in a broadly symbolic fashion. Although he is sceptical about the grounds for believing in the historical Jesus, he does analyse elements of the New Testament in considerable detail and shows how the church and Bible as we know them were shaped by history. In any event, he maintains that the life of Christ as set forth is an expression of the mystical path and can give us access to spiritual perception of divine truth. He points out that Tertullian and Augustine both express incredulity about the Gospels but believe because it is absurd and on authority. Perhaps one of the most striking insights (p. 106) is that the very words of the Lord's Prayer can be found in a slightly longer version in the Talmud. This should perhaps not surprise us since Jesus was a Jewish rabbi. In any event, there are plenty of stimulating interpretations for readers who want to enhance their understanding of the Bible.

The Golden Key to Happiness

Masami Saionji

Booksurge, 2005, 158 pp., no price given.

I met the author of this inspirational book at a conference in Italy. She and her husband run the Goi Peace Foundation in Tokyo. The book is directly addressed to the reader and covers five main themes: that we can use our thought and energy to the fullest, that we can improve all our relationships, that we can overcome life's difficulties, that we can live our lives in love, happiness, forgiveness and harmony, and that we can uncover true self and accomplish our divine mission. The reflections are short and to the point, encouraging readers to maintain positive thoughts and an optimistic attitude and not to allow worry to penetrate the mind. We should take a constructive attitude towards all the people we meet, regardless of their attitude towards us. Our lives unfold according to our wishes and visions, and we are all capable of realising these. It is a wise message of freedom, encouragement and responsibility; and the author clearly implements her own advice.

The Divine Order and the Universe

Compiled by Bedri Ruhselman MD

Divine Order Publishing 2014, £15, p/b.

This channelled book was received in 1959 by the compiler, who in 1950 founded the Metapsychic Investigations and Scientific Research Society in Turkey - their principal areas of interest are mediumistic studies and spiritual communication. This book is divided into three main sections, but there are no chapter headings within this and very little by way of introduction to the book. It launches into a discussion of the nature of matter and being, expressed in physical duality-units and undergoing a process of evolution from the dense to the subtle and towards a higher comprehension of spiritual truths referred to as essence knowledge. This encourages the being onto the path of service or duty through listening to conscience and choosing appropriately. There is extensive discussion of various states of consciousness as well as an interesting exposition of different types or spirals of time. The last part is concerned with the apocalyptic future of humanity as part of the end of the world cycle. The book postulates that a previous world cycle finished some 70,000 years ago with the degeneration and destruction of Mu and Atlantis. Considering that the book was written over 50 years ago, some of the environmental and refugee forecasts are prescient and anticipated to increase, making the planet progressively less habitable. It is envisaged that there will be a final catastrophe before the end of this century but that many beings will be able to migrate to a semi-subtle world of

love, while the residue will be left with a heightened sense of fear and insecurity. It is to be hoped that sufficient remedial actions will be taken to avert the scenario described here, but this is by no means certain - however, I do believe that evolution will continue in other realms.

Illuminating the Way

Christine Valters Paintner

Sorin Books 2016, 198 pp., £11.99, p/b.

This book about embracing the wisdom of monks and mystics is arranged in 12 chapters according to archetypes that the author associates with various historical figures. She draws on the work of Jung, not only for archetypes, but also in terms of the shadow and the use of mandalas. Some people selected are better known than others - Francis of Assisi as the fool, King David as the sovereign, Hildegard as the visionary and Thomas Merton as the monk. Then there is also the fourth century Amma Syncletica as the warrior and Brigid of Kildare as the healer. Interestingly, St Benedict is the sage, and there is a beautiful reflection about the search for wisdom and truth. Rilke embodies the quest of the artist, while Dorothy Day stands for the orphan. Perhaps the most important point is the author's encouragement to acknowledge the multiplicity within ourselves represented by these archetypes. Each chapter also has a beautiful icon with an accompanying quotation as well as material for reflection. At the end there are instructions on contemplative reading - *lectio divina*, which the author and her husband practise on a daily basis; he also provides the corresponding biblical passages and reflections. To enter deeply into these archetypes is to make a corresponding inner journey.

Shamanism

Christa Mackinnon

Hay House 2016, 217 pp., £8.99, p/b.

An excellent addition to the Hay House basics series. The book not only introduces the major aspects of shamanism, but also reflects a growing interest in such fields as a response to the soulless materialism of modern Western societies that has cut us off from our roots in both spirit and nature. The book shows how to develop and alter our perception so that we can enter different worlds on various journeys. It explains four levels of human perception - not only the physical, but also the emotional/mental, the soul and the spirit. The exercises reconnect the reader to life forces and potentially convey the insight that we are much more than just physical bodies. I did, however, wonder about the advisability of undertaking some of these journeys on one's own, and the author does put in a word of caution. At a time when many people want to experience deeper realities for themselves, this book is a significant contribution.

PSYCHOLOGY/CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

Synchronicity

David Peat (SMN)

Pari Publishing 2014, 149 pp., £9.99, p/b.

David Peat has been reflecting on and teaching about synchronicity for many years, and this is the second book on the subject about events that break through into everyday life with a great sense of significance and numinosity, strongly linking the inner and outer. David discusses the nature of mind and consciousness more generally before moving on to the work of Freud and especially of Jung, who coined the term. Jung had a close relationship with the physicist Wolfgang Pauli, who helped him develop some of his ideas but was going through a considerable upheaval in his personal life. Jung helped him work through some powerful dreams and unconscious material. Pauli frequently exerted a powerful effect on objects and equipment. The next chapter explores scientific connections through forces

and fields, including the work of Rupert Sheldrake and David Bohm. A chapter on alchemy leads back to a further discussion of synchronicity in relation to causality. A good deal of work on the subject has been carried out in the last 50 years, elaborating the notion of the collective unconscious both in terms of brain and culture as they feed back on each other. Then there is divination – Jung was very interested in the I Ching. David concludes that synchronicity, with its sensitivity to harmony and the indivisibility of consciousness, has a role to play in addressing our cultural crisis as a point of access to a creative source of infinite potential, with mind and matter arising from a deeper order of reality with which we can relate.

Quantum Creativity

Amit Goswami

Hay House 2014, 241 pp., \$16.95, p/b.

Amit Goswami is well-known for his work on quantum theory and its broader implications. Here he provides an interesting discussion of the relationship between quantum physics and creativity, more particularly between the potential and the actual, the unconscious and the conscious. He situates this within his overall view that consciousness is the foundation of all being, so that manifest matter is preceded by quantum possibilities or potentialities. We also exist within the four worlds of material, vital, mental and supra-mental or spiritual. Conscious choice precipitates the collapse of possibilities into manifest actualities, so creativity discontinuously manifests truly new possibilities from transcendent potentiality. In this context, the mind is defined as giving meaning to the interaction of consciousness and matter. In answering the question of who creates, it is an interface between what he calls the ego self and the quantum self (there is an interesting parallel here with the role of the left and right hemispheres as identified by Iain McGilchrist, but the author does not seem to be aware of this).

Amit distinguishes between outer creativity as we normally understand it, and inner creativity as a transformation of the ego and an expansion of boundaries towards the quantum self. He explains the four stages of creative acts in terms of preparation, incubation, insight and manifestation. There is always an element of discontinuity at the moment of insight, of which he gives a number of examples. Unconscious processing plays a crucial role, as does an alternation between doing and being, will and surrender, work and relaxation. He sees synchronicity as more than chance, and does not rule out creativity from one incarnation to the next. On a metaphysical level, he interprets suffering as a separation from wholeness that is typical of our materialistic and consumerist culture which misleads us about the nature of self-realisation and correspondingly limits our identity and spiritual creativity. The final chapter gives clear guidelines of practices to induce creativity, which include intention setting, slowing down and creative imagination. This is a very satisfying book both on a theoretical and practical level.

Spiritual Telepathy

Colleen Mauro

Quest Books 2015, 209 pp., \$17.95, p/b.

The purpose of this accessible book is to introduce ancient mind-training techniques that allow the reader to access the wisdom and guidance of the soul, connecting it with the lower mind in a form of vertical training. Enabling this to happen is an important evolutionary imperative if we are to move towards a more inclusive and compassionate way of life where we take a universal rather than a purely personal view. The metaphysical background is influenced by Alice Bailey, and includes seven planes of reality as well as the existence of the chakras. The author explains the three minds in terms of the lower or rational, the soul, and the higher or intuitive mind. These correspond broadly to the three types of telepathy – instinctual, gut or animal, mental and spiritual. In the last category, the author gives some very inspiring insights from 19th-century composers who refer to universal currents of divine thought vibrating everywhere (Wagner), tapping a source of infinite and

internal energy (Strauss) and the superconscious mind from which inspiration comes (Brahms) – in this context, she could also have quoted very similar words from Walter Russell with respect to mysticism and science. In order to open oneself to these higher possibilities, one needs to refine one's physical, emotional and mental bodies and be able to build a bridge to the soul through meditation and contemplation of seed thoughts. She gives further examples of soul-aligned humans and a meditation with this in mind. Finally, she invites readers to become World Servers, joining up with others to create a New World based on goodwill. The book provides a good road map in this respect.

Quantum Love

Laura Berman

Hay House 2015, 375 pp., £12.99, p/b.

I confess that I am always a little cautious when a book has 'quantum' in the title as there is so much hype around the use of this term and here we not only have quantum love but also 'quantum sex.' Strictly speaking I think the term 'vibrational' would have been more accurate, but this book is a very good combination of theory and practice that can help a lot of people improve the quality of the emotional and physical relationships. The physical principles of energy, coherence, frequency and entrainment are critical variables, and it is interesting how the author uses the work of David Hawkins with his calibration of emotions in creating her 'Quantum Love map' where we can work things out personally. Her characterisation of three states of consciousness is very useful: 'to me' (the victim/ego), 'by me' (co-creator) and 'through me' when we are in what she calls our home frequency at a higher level of operation. Using the exercises and questionnaires, readers can place themselves on this frequency band, but varying between when they are at their worst and at their best. As we know from experience, each relationship creates its own field or resonance, which Rupert Sheldrake would call morphic.

The author draws not only on her own experience but also on that of many others in her extensive discussion of relationship issues. She also outlines four commitments in terms of taking responsibility for the energy we bring into a relationship, clarifying what we want out of love, taking responsibility for the energy of our body and committing to moving on when we are stuck. Throughout, it is important for us to be in touch with our feelings and intuition, realising that our partners are great teachers and that we can change the dynamics of the relationship by changing ourselves; in this respect, appreciation can be especially important, but we also need to have an accurate knowledge of the needs of our partner. There is plenty of good advice on mental health, nutrition and lifestyle. The final main chapter draws on Tantra and Taoism to provide an overview of practices that will take sexual relationships to another level of intimate communion. Then the appendix provides detailed questionnaires and further exercises. It is a life enhancing and highly informative book.

No Time and Nowhere

Fergus Hinds

iff Books (John Hunt) 2016, 217 pp., £13.99, p/b.

Subtitled 'a nonphysical world behind this one', this book takes the reader on a journey through both psychological and material instances of nonphysical manifestations, the latter involving experiments in quantum physics. The main body of the book is devoted to a consideration of well attested apparitions (which the author terms hallucinations, implying that at that level there is nothing actually there) and precognitions. He gives succinct accounts of many cases and discusses the implications in the course of making a case for a nonphysical world beyond space and time. The first category of apparitions concerns principally space, while the second involves time. Here he could have distinguished between cases that seem like imprints and others suggesting real agency. Those familiar with the literature will realise that these cases have to be taken seriously as an indication of

the underlying nature of reality, while those new to the field will find ample evidence for the author's argument. He goes into the dream state and discusses the nature of imagery and imaging, including some cases of foreknowledge about post-mortem events. It is a thorough and logical treatment justifying his hypothesis 'that there exists an ambience influencing aspects of the physical world that is outside time and space.' By his own admission, there is much more theoretical work to be done the cases discussed demand an explanation along the lines he suggests.

Insides and Outsides

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone

Imprint Academic 2016, 284 pp., no price available, p/b.

This collection of papers from different journals constitutes an interdisciplinary perspective on our experience of inside and outside, self and other, drawing on the work of Husserl, Darwin and many others. The essays invite readers to reflect on their experience of inside and outside, embodiment and being in the world, for example in relation to movement in space and time. The treatment is relatively technical and covers a wide range of themes including the genesis of habit, the relation between emotion and movement, self-ignorance and self-deception, the law of battle between disciplines, parallels between Husserl's phenomenology and Vipassana meditation and the body as a source of fundamental meanings. There are two chapters developing the relationship between the concepts of stranger and enemy and how these can be overcome by trust. The author also devotes a chapter to movement and dance and the notion of globalisation as not only an economic phenomenon, but also one with social, political, psychological and ecological consequences. This provides ample scope for the creation of enemies and invites each of us to become aware of the shadow or enemy within and the danger of projecting this on the outside. All this can considerably enhance reader's reflective self understanding.

AI – Its Nature and Future

Margaret Boden, FBA

Oxford 2016, 198 pp., £12.99, h/b.

As Prof Jack Copeland says on the back cover, this book really provides everything you need to know about artificial intelligence, both in terms of its history, current developments and prospects for the future. The story goes back to the 1950s with Turing and Cybernetics and the emergence of distinctive fields modelling language and logical thinking on the one hand and purposive/adaptive motor behaviour on the other. The holy grail of the field is general intelligence and there has been spectacular progress on a number of fronts. There are chapters on language, creativity and emotion, artificial neural networks, and robots and artificial life. This leads to a careful discussion of the sense in which artificial intelligence is intelligence as we generally understand it. The author is a reliable and balanced guide through discussions of machine and phenomenal consciousness and even the question of whether machines might be moral in any meaningful sense. She takes a sceptical view, along with phenomenologists, of the prospects for a singularity and a machine-controlled world. It was reassuring to learn about the development of 'Friendly AI' that is not underpinned by a left hemisphere logic of manipulation. In any event, the informed discussion to be found in this book gives serious pause for thought.

Other than Mother

Kamalamani

Earth Books (John Hunt) 2015, 270 pp., £14.95, p/b.

The author of this book about choosing childlessness with life in mind is both a therapist and Buddhist nun. The discussion is divided into three parts, first the background of the worldly winds of pleasure and pain, loss and gain, fame and infamy, praise and blame, which play a prominent role in forming our identity and expectations – in the case of women this includes the powerful role model and status of the mother. Increasing

numbers of women are now choosing consciously not to have children in spite of these pressures, many of which come from the family and our ideas about normality. The second part focuses on the decision-making process, drawing on the author's own experience and thinking around the issue. These will reflect the thoughts of any women seriously considering the question, including potential regret. This is addressed more fully in the third part about living with the decision and making sure that any void is filled by giving birth to projects in the time that would otherwise have been devoted to raising children. The decision-making process can ebb and flow, but each possibility represents a new beginning – in her own case the aspiration to participate in the calling of the bodhisattva. A sensitive, enlightening and compassionate book.

Why Can't I Meditate?

Nigel Wellings

Tarcher Penguin 2016, 355 pp., \$16, p/b.

The question in the title will be familiar to anyone who has undertaken a meditation practice and struggled with keeping themselves on track in everyday life after the original weekend seminar. This means incorporating mindfulness practice as an everyday habit and prioritising it over other pressing activities. The author has some experience of this himself and draws on that of other teachers and meditators in a series of interviews. I think this is the first book of its kind, and contains a wealth of practical advice as well as being highly recommended by respected practitioners. Various kinds of resistance are discussed, including the sense of vulnerability and the necessity to meet oneself as one really is, especially on an emotional level and in relation to wounds from the past that have not been resolved. The reader is advised simply to be present in such circumstances and aware of defence mechanisms arising from one's temperament and background. The practice can also challenge core beliefs and bring one more directly to a realisation of impermanence – especially in relation to the ego. The underlying process is one of growth towards greater wisdom, kindness and compassion, including self-compassion, as both Paul Gilbert and Jon Kabat-Zinn suggest. At the end, there is a quick fix chart for the struggling meditator summarising many of the insights of this valuable and helpful book.

ECOLOGY-FUTURES STUDIES

Social Change 2.0

David Gershon

Chelsea Green High Point, 2009, 406 pp., no price available, h/b. (www.socialchange2.com)

This extraordinary book has sat rather too long on my review shelves and should have been reviewed some years ago – however, better late than never. David Gershon is a pioneering social entrepreneur who has been active in transformative change since the late 1960s. The book lives up to its subtitle of a blueprint for reinventing our world and going beyond what the author calls Social Change 1.0 in terms of government command and control, financial incentives and citizen protest. Social Change 2.0 starts from the premise that these previous tools are inadequate to the magnitude of the challenge of transforming and reorganising our societies at a higher level of performance. The author places the primary responsibility on us when we are empowered with a vision and the means to bring it to fruition. In this respect, we need new forms of leadership.

The first part of this book describes four social transformations involving learning journeys illustrating process, context and content. In each case, communities are mobilised around a common vision and plan of action involving strategic partnership and collaboration. The second part lays out the design principles for transformative social change with chapters on empowerment, transformation, social innovation, building a unitive field, and leveraging disproportionate influence.

All the steps are explained, with useful charts of tools and processes that can be applied in different contexts. Aspiration, inspiration and hope need to be generated, as well as a deeper interpersonal understanding on the part of participants. Once a pilot has been achieved, this can then be disseminated and scaled up. The third part deals with leadership capacity, the empowerment of a climate change movement through the idea of a low carbon diet, and the possibility of transforming the paradigm of war through the emergence of unity consciousness. This is literally a question of revisioning ourselves and our capacities as human beings. The book is a roadmap not only for reinventing our world, but also for the processes by which this can be achieved. The author is convinced that 'people are willing to change if they have a compelling vision and are provided tools to help them bring it into being.' This in turn will transform the nature of our institutions as reflections of the new way of thinking. Compelling and inspirational reading for all would-be social entrepreneurs.

Me to We

Craig and Marc Kielburger

Me to We 2016 (2004), 262 + 144 pp. (workbook), no price given, p/b.

In March, I attended a We Day along with 12,000 young people with teachers and guests at Wembley Arena - it is a mixture of inspirational speaking and pop concert. Each of these young people was there because they had helped in their community and had earned a place with their work in the context of Free the Children, a charity initiated by Craig and Marc Kielburger when Marc was only 12. Over 20 years later, their work is testament to the kind of vision described in David Gershon's book above. The brothers have received many honours and prizes as they continue to galvanise and expand their efforts. The philosophy described here is very simple and accessible - we are wired to reach out to each other and together we can change the world. This is one of the most important messages to convey to young people, where I also play my part with Inspire>Aspire (see www.inspire-aspire.org.uk - this year we reached over 25,000 young people).

The book describes the extraordinary stories not only of Craig and Marc, but also of many others like Desmond Tutu, Oprah Winfrey, Jane Goodall, Richard Gere and Queen Noor, who have supported their work. The authors take a critical look and superficial modern ideas on happiness, pointing out that real fulfilment means serving and helping others. There are chapters on gratitude and empathy, as well as plenty of inspiration in terms of guidance towards living a Me to We life. Above all, it is a demonstration of what can be achieved by starting with a small group of committed people with a clear vision. There are many moving episodes, including the time when Craig was given a T-shirt by a street child, Jose, with whom he had been playing football with a plastic bottle. This was his only T-shirt. Craig tried to refuse, but Jose insisted, and he reciprocated. It was a moving example of real communication and trust. Similarly, Marc found himself in the medical front line at the age of 20, with no experience whatsoever. He was on the point of coming home when a local invited him to a terrific party, so he decided to stay on and worked in these appalling conditions before going on to Harvard then Oxford as a Rhodes scholar. He turned down all sorts of lucrative jobs order to pursue this work. I urge you to read this book, be inspired, join the movement and make your own contribution.

A World to Live In

George M. Woodwell

MIT Press 2016, 227 pp., £19.95, h/b.

This ecologist's vision for a plundered planet draws on 40 years of scientific research and activism to reinforce the prevailing scientific and environmental consensus over and against continuing emphasis on economic growth driven by corporate profits externalising environmental costs. It is somewhat chilling to read the prescient testimony delivered to the Senate in 1988 about climate trends, which have relentlessly continued

to unfold since that date. Is the author points out, the critical areas are politics, economics and the environment. The power has shifted so far in the direction of corporate economics, that policies are skewed in their favour and politicians sing from their hymn sheet. Woodwell zooms out to present a picture of the impact of a century of industrial development that has brought about greater changes to the Earth than any period in human history. We now know that the Earth is a living system and that its stability is threatened by human disruption, more especially from the by-products of the energy and agriculture industries. It is one of the special features of this book to highlight the polluting impact of unsustainable industrial agriculture, for instance in the creation of the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico. The overall impact of humans on the biosphere was already identified by George Perkins Marsh, a contemporary of Darwin and author of *The Earth as Modified by Human Action* first published in 1885.

Along with many other informed voices, Woodwell calls for a return to fundamentals so that we can understand the underlying forces driving destructive ecological trends and the economic and political system that allows this situation to continue unfettered. His concern is with the integrity of the entire biosphere, which has been compromised by nuclear explosions, chemicals and carbon. We need to be mindful of the global commons and ensure closed loops to prevent the externalisation of costs. We are beginning to see some of the widespread disruption caused by environmental refugees, which will only get worse. In this scenario, adaptation is absolutely insufficient and mitigation is required, especially in view of feedback loops that will intensify climate chaos. Our impact has been chronic, cumulative and relentless, and now demands the fundamental recognition of the integrity of the biosphere since the future of civilisation hangs in the balance. In Woodwell's view, this calls for regenerative action and a government emphasis on public welfare. However, in their present form, governments are simply not up to the job for the reasons outlined above and the sheer interlinked complexity of multiple issues. There are certainly trends towards localisation and smaller scale activity, but these are countered by vast developments of soya in the Amazon to feed animals eaten by humans. The only answer will be pressure exerted by NGOs and Internet campaigns based on ideas set out in this book and in many others, which themselves reflect a scientific consensus.

Climate Change and Anthropos

Linda H. Connor

Earthscan 2016, 206 pp., £85, h/b.

In this book, anthropologist Linda Connor offers an analysis of planet, people and places in relation to climate change, with a special focus on the Hunter Valley in Australia where she made a study of people's experiences of environmental change. There, coal is a major factor, which is one reason for the author's observations on the relationship between combustion and culture (there are some great cartoons in the text). Increasing numbers of books, especially in these academic series published by Earthscan, are exploring the civilisational implications of climate change as part of the overall human impact on the environment. The anthropological method of participant observation gives important insights into ways of life and thinking in particular localities. It is clear, for example, that the impact of climate change on some communities in the Arctic is already considerable, while in other places the reasons for environmental change are more contested and reflect ideas discussed in the media.

It is striking how many of the views quoted from interviews are not in fact informed by science but are still considered to be equally valid by their proponents. This is reflected in cyclical interpretations of climate change, which do not stack up with the latest assessments. More generally, we see a good deal of 'two-track thinking' where acknowledgement of the dangers of human-induced climate change is maintained within the status quo of business as usual. Others try to do their bit as responsible citizens and/or work with their community

as activists. It is apparent that Australian federal and local government policies on the environment may be inconsistent, and it is also evident that people in general are concerned about the future of their children and grandchildren. Hence, there is widespread support for policies of precaution and adaptation. The final chapter takes a psychological look at our apocalyptic prospect, framing it in terms of mortality and human finitude giving rise to resistance and denial. Some Christians interpret our situation in accordance with the last things in the Bible, while technically-minded men are inclined towards geo-engineering solutions which many people regard as hubristic; a desperate attempt to preserve our consumer culture without making any fundamental changes.

The Water, Food, Energy and Climate Nexus

Edited by Felix Dodds and Jamie Bartram

Earthscan 2016, 265 pp., £31.99, p/b.

Median estimates of world population in 2050 are 9.6 billion people, of whom 70% will be living in cities. This represents an increase of 2.3 billion on current figures with forecasts of an increase in demand of 70% for food, and 40% in energy by 2030, with similar figures for energy. As you can also see in my review of *A Future Beyond Growth*, these projections should be ringing alarm bells in terms of the adequacy of our current approaches to population, food, water and energy. The book contains a foreword by the Prince of Wales, who is well aware of the need to move towards a sustainable and circular economy. The main topics cover the history of the Millennium Development Goals and their transition into Sustainable Development Goals that apply to all economies, urban challenges, natural resource security, the various nexuses between key elements and the potential for corporate stewardship. It is good to see a growing awareness of systemic interconnectedness between critical factors, as illustrated in a couple of charts. Central to these is well-being in terms of society, economy and environment, which means water, food and energy security. Without a more sophisticated understanding of feedback loops, policy responses are likely to remain inadequate. In addition to the Nexus of the title, other key factors include education, gender, health, overall terrestrial ecosystems and infrastructure. Each of these areas has its own specialists, but they frequently lack any cross-disciplinary understanding and remain in their own silos. We badly need the kind of analysis set out in this significant book.

Contemporary Perspectives on Ecofeminism

Edited by Mary Phillips and Nick Rumens

Earthscan 2016, 233 pp., £90, h/b.

Drawing on insights from ecology, feminism and socialism, eco-feminism analyses the ideology that authorises oppressions based on race, class, gender, sexuality as a parallel to the oppression of Nature. Quite a lot of space in this volume is devoted to refuting the charge of essentialism in terms of a distinctive feminine approach, but I do think that there are common attitudes towards the body, women and Nature that have pervaded monotheistic outlooks. The structure of the book corresponds to the equal emphasis on academic analysis and activism, which are both concerned with issues of justice. The introduction quotes from the WWF *Living Planet Report* showing that populations of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish around the globe dropped by 52% between 1970 and 2010. In the same period, human population more than doubled.

The essays in the first part discussed the eco-feminist perspective on the relationship between humans and animals, emotional and physical distancing from the world as a reason for governmental inertia, and the multiple facets of our crisis as ecological, social, political and economic. This last essay makes a critique of domination, based on three central principles: the role of alienation and reification; dualism, separation and identification; and instrumentalism and objectification. The argument owes something to Marx, and has interesting implications as a critique of liberal

individualism along with instrumental reason, adding up to an alienation from Nature. Although these ideas may seem quite abstract, they do have considerable practical relevance and can provide intellectual fuel for NGOs and social movements. The second part looks at a number of situations including funding for women's farming, the role of game ranger's wives in conservation, narratives of climate change and climate justice, post-colonialism in South African townships, gender theory and resource management, and the emergence of spiritual principles in business. One interesting theme is the contrast between the instrumental values of techno-science with the logic of care and relational values of cooperation, dependency and flourishing that we may unthinkingly ascribe more to women, but which, as Carol Gilligan shows, are in fact a human capacity. The book is a timely reminder of important issues that we cannot afford to neglect.

Rivers of Wind

Ben Kessler

ICRL Press 2016, 169 pp., \$12.95, p/b.

In the foreword to this vibrant book connecting Nature with language there is a quote from Goethe: 'life in its wholeness is expressed as a force not attributable to any individual part of an organism'; and it goes without saying that we are both part of this and an expression of the same force. The titles of these essays are evocative, such as Riddles, Lethe, Provinces of the, Last Season's Fruit, Parasitism, and Apoptosis. The author is convinced, with reason, that our passivity in relation to Nature is the death of a world through our very lifestyles and destruction of biodiversity as part of Nature's resilience. In case you're wondering, apoptosis is the transformation of the caterpillar into a butterfly, a metaphor widely used these days, but which the author elaborates in fascinating detail, also asking about the purpose served by death. Some languages evolve in partnership with landscapes and people and are more adequate as a result of this embeddedness, which we also recognise in appreciating living beauty. The author believes that the language of sustainability is insufficient, and should be replaced by the idea is thriving as full of life - I agree. He digs deeper by writing about the importance of stories and the poetry of language as a powerful way of communicating from the heart. In this way we have more chance of being true to ourselves and *treu* - loyal and true to Nature.

The Economics of Chocolate

Edited by Mara P. Squicciarani and Johan Swinnen

Oxford 2016, 478 pp., £31.95, h/b.

Reading this comprehensive volume will tell you more about chocolate than you knew there was to know. It originates in a conference and is divided into five main sections: history, consumption, governance and industrial organisation, markets and prices, and new chocolate markets. As many people know, the history of chocolate in the West only goes back to the 1600s and was originally based on the drink. Only in the 1820s was an industrial process developed resulting in the familiar chocolate bar. Switzerland and Belgium are the best-known producer countries, and it is fascinating to discover how these have evolved over the last 100 years. Like coffee, the health effects of chocolate are controversial, but it seems that the dark version is the best, at around 70% - just how I like it... There is considerable discussion of supply chains and fair trade as well as markets and prices over time. Not surprisingly, the largest new markets are India and China where the demand is such that there could even be a world shortage.

The Pursuit of Development

Ian Goldin

Oxford 2016, 214 pp., £11.99, h/b.

Ian Goldin has had a distinguished career as an economist, including at the World Bank, and is currently director of the Oxford Martin School, which is a premier research institution. This is an authoritative and highly readable account of evolution of economic and social development that goes beyond a focus on economic growth to a broader understanding of well-being. He defines development and its history, including key factors of natural resources, infrastructure, the environment, finance, education, health and gender. A different emphasis on the various aspects accounts for the large disparity and varying developmental trajectories between countries. The most important current framework is expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals that have succeeded the earlier Millennium Development Goals and reflect a more sophisticated and universally applicable approach. The success of much development means that the middle-class will expand from 500 million in the 1980s to 4 billion in the 2020s, with a corresponding increase in environmental impact. Goldin is fully aware of the implications, but feels that some important lessons have been learned although enormous challenges will remain in terms of climate change, conflict, fundamentalism and pandemics requiring increasing cooperation and partnership.

DEATH AND DYING

Dying to Know You

P. M. H. Atwater

Rainbow Ridge Books 2014, 122 pp., \$15.95, p/b.

P.M.H. Atwater is well-known in the field of near death studies as the author of 15 books, some of which concern her own three NDEs in the 1970s. Here she has distilled her reading and understanding of over 4,000 child and adult experiences where the main theme is that God exists, but a God beyond normal understanding and even description, a Source characterised by an all-encompassing sense of oneness. The chapter headings such as God, soul, life and death, heaven and hell, aftereffects and threshold indicate the profound nature of the insights. She writes that death is a step-up of energy implying a shift to an increased speed of vibration. Sometimes death is expected by the one dying but not at all by the family, and there are some striking instances here. I think she is right in saying that near death experience validates the core teachings of world religions but from a universal perspective. She quotes Steve Jobs to the effect that remembering you are going to die is the best way to stop thinking you have something to lose. I was fascinated to read about the role of near death experiences in the life of Walter Russell, culminating in his illumination at the age of 49 giving him insights into the underlying dynamics of the universe. It is important to remember we can only take the essence of ourselves into the next dimension and the love we have shared with others as we evolve in being, not only individually, but more importantly as an interactive collective. Towards the end of the book, there is a remarkable summary of the author's life philosophy of love, freedom, knowing and service - a timely reminder of essential values.

Dying to be Free

Hannah Robinson

O Books (John Hunt) 2016, 133 pp., £9.99, p/b.

This unusual and moving memoir recounts the transformative journey of the author, whose father was a trainee Catholic priest at the time of her birth. He imposed secretive terms on her mother, which reflected the standard practice at the time and set up a huge tension in her life, especially during adolescence. This culminates in a serious accident leading to a near death experience and a different perspective on

her life journey, as well as an experience of love transcending the rejection she felt. Even when they did meet, she felt no real connection with her father and experienced a sense of toxic shame. Her NDE gave her a deeper sense of identity and had a similar effect to the experience of Anita Moorjani (the title of this book is a variation on her title). Later, she has a vision warning her of the serious health condition of her mother. The message of his book, like so many in this field, is the existence and implications of an all-encompassing, accepting, unconditional love of which we are worthy. I learned of the existence of an organisation called Coping, which represents the interests of children of Catholic priests – it was an enormous relief for Hannah to find others in her situation. She concludes that the structure of the Catholic church needs to transform, because enforced secrecy is unhealthy for children of priests. It is a poignant and thought-provoking account.

Peaceful Passages

Janet Wehr

Quest Books 2014, 211 pp., \$16.95, p/b.

This profoundly humane book tells the story of a dedicated hospice nurse and the good deaths she has witnessed over a 20-year period. The seven chapters address understanding death, ways of saying goodbye, heart warming relationships, mysterious and spiritual experiences, tough customers, comic relief and cultural differences. The value lies in the individual stories with the touching details and overall lessons for compassionate and professional practice. There are of course many perspectives on the dying process from patients and families, but an overall impression of departure and transition on a further journey. Perhaps the most interesting experiences relate to two dreams. In one, Janet experiences the death of a patient, while in the other both mother and son had the same dream premonition of his early death - she when he was two and he went he was 12. Among the lighter moments are where she asks one patient if she has any pain, to which the patient replies, only when it hurts. Another asked for a ticking clock to be buried with her, so that she had something to listen to until she got used to being dead. Janet gives an important message in her closing reflections that working with the dying gives an immediate experience of the fragility and impermanence of the thread of life, reminding us all of the precious opportunity that it represents.

GENERAL

Democracy – A Life

Paul Cartledge

Oxford 2016, 383 pp., £20, h/b.

Democracy is a biography of the concept, going back to 6th century Greece and following it through its various manifestations to a peak in the fourth century and a gradual decline thereafter, also in relation to Rome. It is important to remember that the original Greek democracy was direct, although limited to men as citizens, while the modern meaning entails representation, or what Lord Hailsham used to call elective dictatorship. From late Antiquity until the Renaissance, democracy was eclipsed by other forms of government but eventually re-emerges in the modern form in 17th century England, then 18th-century France and North America, championed by Thomas Paine. Modern forms of democracy can still learn something from ancient practices and I liked the definition from Josiah Ober of democracy as 'collective self-government that is at once stably effective and limited'. Cartledge would like to go further and sees the emergence of tele-democracy by combining new digital and information technology with ancient democratic practice – this may also require an international Bill of Digital Rights. This may represent a clarion call for the West but there are other absolutist forces with completely opposing ideas; and the reality is that we live in a pseudo-democracy underpinned by plutocracy as expressed in funding contributions and honours.

Britain's Secret Wars

T.J. Coles

Clairview Books 2016, 214 pp., £14.99, p/b.

This meticulous account lays bare in documented detail the extent of Britain's covert foreign policy supporting war, conflict and oppression around the world. These activities are well hidden and would create outrage among public opinion if they were openly admitted, hence the Chatham House formulation that 'a successful foreign policy requires a degree of secrecy and duplicity, and willingness to employ spies, engage in bribery, threaten, even use force, compromise principles, pursue clandestine, sometimes illegal, operations, and support dubious regimes.' This revealing study provides plenty of evidence for this in covert activities around the world, including Syria, Libya, Iraq, Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Bangladesh. The analysis shows a brazen pursuit of power and self-interest, for instance in terms of commercial opportunities opened up to companies through the devastations of war; also the contrast between the headline stories than the real agenda, often expressed in terms of defending national security or humanitarian aid.

Proxy wars created Al Qaeda and, indirectly, ISIS. Then we have to manage the continuing fallout of these decisions. The chapter on drones is deeply disturbing, and it is clear that most use is illegal, quite apart from collateral civilian casualties. The use of tactical nuclear weapons in Fallujah was unconscionable, all the more so when it was denied despite birth defects among the local population and chronic illness among veterans. It becomes clear that Ukraine is a proxy battleground and a very dangerous one at that. Underlying much of this covert activity is the US pursuit of Full Spectrum Dominance defined as military superiority over land, sea, air, space and information by 2020. Much CIA activity, classified and unclassified, seems to be directed to this end. As long as we have a political system based on selfish national interest and power politics, covert operations are set to continue, reinforcing the war economy of arms trading and creating mutual distrust. Books like this can help inform readers and encourage them towards grassroots action, which alone holds out the prospect of a different world.

How to Have a Good Day

Caroline Webb

Seven Shift 2016, 360 pp., \$26, h/b.

Caroline Webb is a management consultant and executive coach who spent 15 years at McKinsey and now runs her own company. In this practical and highly useful book, she draws on findings from behavioural economics, psychology and neuroscience as well as personal interviews and experiences to help readers transform their working lives. From psychology she takes a greater focus on well-being, from economics more realism in theories of behaviour, and from neuroscience more sophisticated measurement of brain activity. Three main themes run through every chapter: the two systems brain - one deliberate and controlled, the other automatic and instinctive; the discover-defend axis where discovery is oriented towards reward and defence against threats; finally, the mind-body loop, which is much more tightly coupled than we previously realised. In these ways, a change of intention leads to a change of filters and therefore interpretation of a particular situation.

The seven chapters cover priorities, productivity, relationships, thinking, influence, resilience and energy. The principles are clearly explained with practical examples of everyday situations, and excellent summaries at the end of each chapter. Among the helpful recommendations are writing things down as soon as they come to mind so as not to waste the brain's precious working memory, identifying the very next thing to do in terms of each project, focusing on one thing at once and batching tasks, realising when one is in a defensive or avoidance mode and knowing how to transform this. It is also useful to know how the brain processes information, not only for oneself, but also for

one's communications. The advice on business relationships is very constructive, as is the section on resolving tensions. Then we all need to learn how to be resilient, move on and conserve our energy and enjoyment. One of the appendices contains an excellent chart on how to reinvigorate your routine, summarising much of the key material. A highly informative users' manual for making the most of the working day in terms of thinking, feeling and doing.

How to be a Productivity NINJA

Graham Alcott

Icon Books 2015, 343 pp., £8.99, p/b.

If you are like me, you are always looking for ways of becoming more productive - this book offers a new slant on the topic by focusing more on attention rather than time management. It also recommends developing a number of characteristics including Zen-like calm, ruthlessness, mindfulness, agility, preparedness and unorthodoxy. Very few of us have a sense of completion on a daily basis as we feel overwhelmed with information and to-do lists. This sense of completion gives us some clear space, and in one chapter is usefully applied to advice on managing one's inbox. One also needs to set aside time for creative thinking during periods of proactive attention (the other two forms are active intention and inactive intention - we are advised to workout our own rhythm in this respect). The heart of the book is the CORD model - capture and collect, organise, review and do. I have already applied the advice on project, weekly and daily checklists, which one can keep together on a single Excel spreadsheet. There is good advice on meetings where 40% represents preparation, 20% the meeting itself, and another 40% follow-up; also on inertia and resistance, which we are all very good at and that needs overcoming on a daily basis if one is to keep things on track. Highly recommended.

Places of Truth

Jay Ramsay

Awen 2016, 169 pp., £12, p/b.

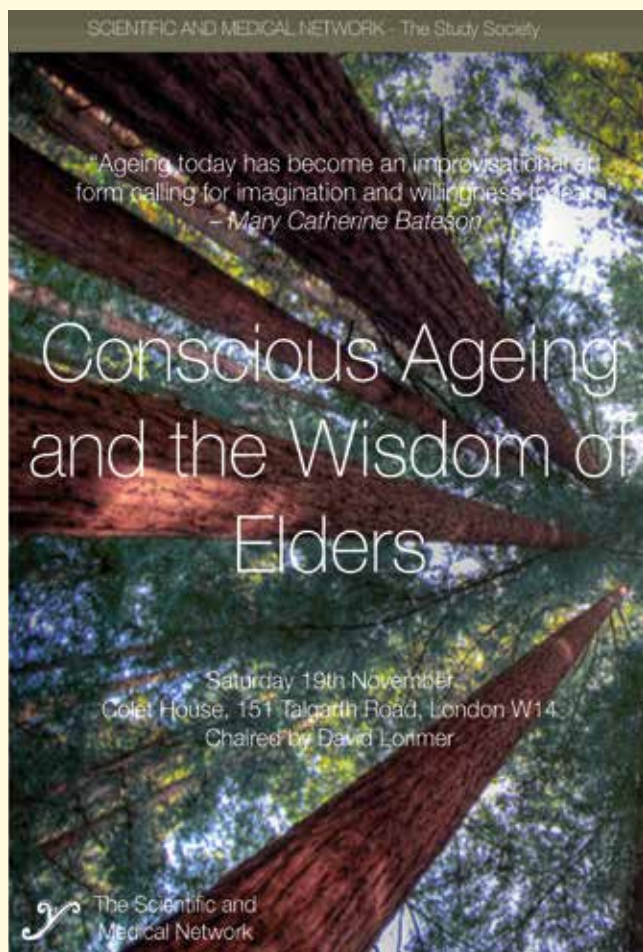
Jay Ramsay is one of the prophetic poetic voices of our time, and in this book he expresses his experience of journeys into sacred wilderness in a number of different places including Wales, Scotland and Sinai. On such journeys we are pilgrims conscious of both inner process and its subtle interrelationship with our surroundings. The sharp distinction dissolves in contemplative awareness. We become aware of our own transience in ancient places but also of the essentials of life in terms of love, peace and joy. The mountain in the rain is larger than life, silent and expansive while inviting surrender to prevailing conditions. Finally, the desert, endless sand but also offering a striking vaginal cave (depicted on the cover) and symbolising rebirth where heart and sex are one, resting in Nature. The journey, however, continues with its dual narrative of ego and Self inviting us to a wider and deeper experience of love and freedom - a further initiation and a book that is food for the soul.

Stargazers' Almanac 2017

Bob Mizon

Floris Books 2015, £14.99, large format.

This is an annual invaluable monthly guide to the stars and planets including a general chart and some basic astronomical information. The structure gives monthly guidance with items of interest and a North and South looking sky on the 15th of the month; also a guide to the phases of the moon. Additional items in 2017 include an article on Charles Messier, the great French astronomer, and the Great American Eclipse of 2017 on August 21. Incidentally, there are 68 total eclipses of the sun scheduled for the 21st century. We can currently see both Mars and Saturn in the Southern sky, as I confirmed from this year's edition. This is a great guide for anyone interested in the night sky.



The Frenchman's Cove Experience Port Antonio, Jamaica 2017

17th - 22nd January

(suggested travel from London 16th - 25th January)

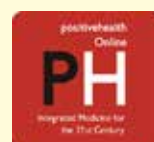
Professor Bernard Carr

will present

The Cosmic Consciousness Connection



Science has been remarkably successful in describing the material world from the smallest scales of particle physics to the largest scales of cosmology. It has also revealed an intimate link - or cosmic connection - between the microscopic and macroscopic domains, this culminating in the Big Bang. Curiously, however, consciousness is completely absent from this picture, even though there are good reasons for believing that this is a fundamental rather than incidental feature of the Universe. So what are the implications of this and how can the 'Theory of Everything' be expanded to accommodate mind, spirituality and non-material realms?



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The Scientific and Medical Network is a leading international forum for people engaged in creating a new worldview for the 21st century. The Network brings together scientists, doctors, psychologists, engineers, philosophers, complementary practitioners and other professionals, and has Members in more than thirty countries. The Network is a charity which was founded in 1973 and became a company limited by guarantee at the beginning of 2004.

The Network aims to:

- challenge the adequacy of scientific materialism as an exclusive basis for knowledge and values.
- provide a safe forum for the critical and open minded discussion of ideas that go beyond reductionist science.
- integrate intuitive insights with rational analysis.
- encourage a respect for Earth and Community which emphasises a spiritual and holistic approach.

In asking searching questions about the nature of life and the role of the human being, the Network is:

- Open to new observations and insights;
- Rigorous in evaluating evidence and ideas;
- Responsible in maintaining the highest scientific and ethical standards;
- Sensitive to a plurality of viewpoints

Network services

- Network Review, published three times a year
- Monthly e-newsletter for members with email
- Promotion of contacts between leading thinkers in our fields of interest
- A blog discussing current and controversial topics and science, medicine and spirituality (<http://scimednet.blogspot.com>)
- A website with a special area for Members including discussion groups
- Regional groups which organise local meetings
- Downloadable MP3s from our conferences

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The Network's annual programme of events includes:

- Three annual residential conferences (The Annual Gathering, Mystics and Scientists and Beyond the Brain alternating with The Body and Beyond)
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- An open day of dialogues on a topical subject
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- Special Interest Group meetings on themes related to science, consciousness and spiritual traditions
- Student concessionary rates and some bursaries available

Joining the Network

Membership of the Network is open to anyone who wishes to explore some of the most difficult questions of our time in concert with a community of like minds. Student members must be studying towards a first degree engaged in full-time study.

Subscription Rates

Membership of the Networks costs £48 (with printed review). Please contact the office for further details. £36 electronic and undergraduate student membership free.

Membership Applications

To request a membership application form, please contact:

**The Network Manager,
The Scientific and Medical Network,
151 Talgarth Road,
London W14 9DA, England
Tel: +44 (0) 203 468 2034**

Email: info@scimednet.org

www.scimednet.org