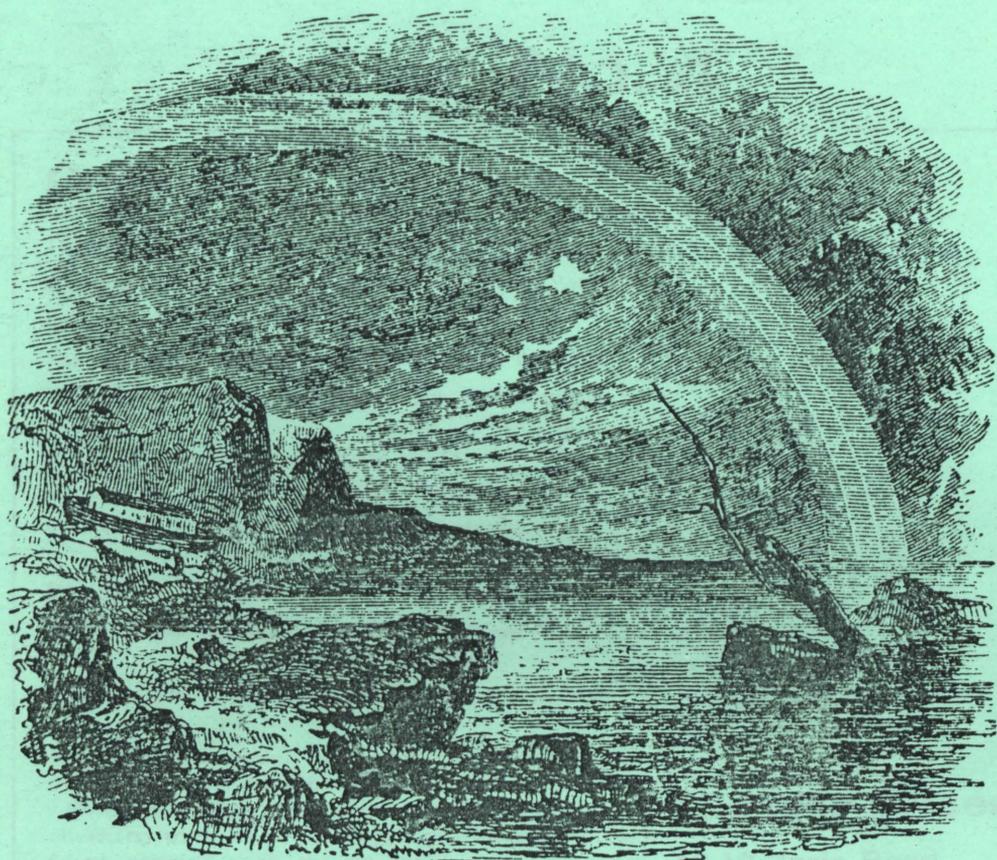


The Wild Places



**The Wild Places**

**No. 4**

# The Wild Places

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Please make all payments out to the Editor, Kevin McClure. Thanks!

### The Wild Places

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## Talking to Strangers



I have no doubt that our readers are most interested in contact with non-human intelligences, in one form or another - with the 'dead', with alien intelligences, or with more traditional religious or archetypal figures. Reports of such contacts seem to be the driving force behind our involvement in this field.

When I was researching my book about visions of the Virgin Mary, and trying to assess if there was any objective reality to what was seen, I realised that there was one important flaw, one weakness in the religious argument. If the Virgin Mary - liturgically accepted as uniquely able to travel at will between Heaven and Earth - could appear when, and where, and to whomever she wished, why did she only ever appear in countries, even specific locations, where there was a strong tradition of Catholicism? No explorer ever arrived on a South Sea island to find a flourishing Marian cult. The Virgin didn't turn up in China, or India, or Japan. She hardly even appeared in Britain or America, and when she did it was within communities where there was a strong pre-existent belief that she could do so. All of those who say they see her know, simply, both what she is meant to look like, and what she could be expected to say.

I suspect that this same flaw occurs in reports of other contacts, particularly where they appear to have fixed time limits, beginning or ending the period of the reports. There is virtually no tradition of direct spirit contact - particularly in physical form - prior to 1860. And very little indeed after 1950. Nor do the features of mediumistic communication occur in cultures where there is no pre-existent knowledge of them: their ways of dealing with the dead are different.

While it is difficult to look as objectively at a current phenomenon, I reckon the same reservations apply to the UFO abduction/intrusion events we are presently trying to deal with. For all that some witnesses are now referring back to alleged childhood experiences prior to the late Sixties, that is a pretty clear starting date. The reports have developed stage by stage and are now so complex - and so rigidly constructed - that investigators are proposing the use of matrices to record and analyse them. Yet they have not occurred independently in countries and places where popular culture is unaware of them, let alone where there has been nobody to encourage the sort of continuous revelation abductees are expected to produce. The growing range of reports from the Soviet Union (as was) only confirms the close relationship between the input of information available to potential witnesses, and the character of the reports those witnesses present.

Just now, I am no more convinced of the independent existence of alien abductors than I am of that of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## Architects of an Alien World by Jenny Randles

In September 1991 I was fortunate enough to be invited to Australia to lecture on UFOs. Such was the extraordinary public interest that for a week I was bombarded with questions at a level beyond that I had ever experienced on media tours of the UK - certainly for many years. This was followed by a conference in Sydney where leading UFO investigators gathered and presented a series of impressive papers illustrating the amazing depth of our evidence. Nobody could have come through that unscathed.

None of this should have been a surprise to me. None of it was a surprise. Yet as I flew north from Sydney towards far north Queensland I had a near revelatory experience on the plane. I realised it was coming from the moment when I found myself closing my lecture about alien abduction cases with the words I had long avoided - saying that all of this evidence led us towards only one conclusion. Despite all the IFOs and the UAP (unidentified atmospheric phenomena) it was very hard - if not impossible - to honestly conclude that some form of intelligence was not responsible for some of the UFO data. I knew I had run from this option for various reasons, notably my innate scepticism, and fear of peer reaction.

In my hotel room in Cairns I sat gazing at the mudflats leading out towards the Great Barrier Reef and penned a letter to Jerry Clark, editor of the International UFO Reporter. We had said goodbye the night before. Now I wanted to share this curious blend of reckless conviction and insight before logic washed it away like the Pacific tides. Later he told me that he read and re-read my letter as it moved him. I forget now exactly what I had said but I did this purposely so as to cut off my escape route. I knew that once written there would be no retreat to the sanctuary of indecision.

I made my position known in the September/October 1991 issue of Northern UFO News. It was partly linked to a number of recent impressive, but ambiguous, cases that speak loud to those who listen. My editorial provoked more strong feelings than anything I had written for years.

The last such reaction had been a decade earlier when I had written that mind was an energy field and energy fields - like all electromagnetic forces - travelled at the speed of light. Einstein's relativity equations had proved that anything travelling at this velocity was timeless and spaceless. I

recall in my university physics class pointing this out to the lecturer who had just told me that nothing could travel at the speed of light - Einstein had proved this fact - whereas, by definition alone, I told him light itself clearly did! In response I got a gaping mouth, a flustered 'it's not as simple as that' and a rapid move onto the next topic.

My NUFON readers had reacted similarly to this simple demonstration that survival of death and precognition were both facts. They had to be if mind was timeless and spaceless. Readers took one of two lines. Some told me it was a staggering intuitive leap. Others that it was total garbage. As I responded next issue, I suspected the truth lay somewhere in-between.

Now I faced a similar situation. Some of my loyal Northern UFO News readers regarded my claim that I had publicly embraced the ETH (extraterrestrial hypothesis) as outright heresy: although to me ETH may not mean what it does to them. There were whispers about selling out to commercial ventures (but my rumoured book to prove the ETH was not on the cards). One reader even told me that my editorial described clear symptoms of schizophrenia, and I had obviously been overdoing it whilst in Australia. A couple praised my bravery, but they were definitely in the minority.

The thing which created the greatest shock was my comment, made almost in passing, that I had had an 'abduction'. I purposely made apparent that I did not mean this literally. But I was swamped with demands that I reveal the truth. So in the November/December issue I was forced to do just that.

In fact my abduction was not something I had ever hidden. If I had had my way, it would have formed the final 5,000 words of my 1988 book 'Abduction', but Robert Hale cut this from the manuscript on the grounds that it would destroy the objectivity of the book. As the book has had all the impact of a wet lettuce I suspect this was premature, but I did let a few colleagues read the chapter. Oddly none ever made any comment to me.

Whilst writing the book I had worked with a clinical psychologist for some weeks to try to understand regression hypnosis. I needed to experience it to understand it as the witnesses had, and so I allowed myself to be taken back to a light in the sky type sighting in August 1978 when with my then boyfriend. I had always accepted (and still do accept) that this was just an aircraft: although the vivid blue light circling us in a Chester field had stuck oddly and emotively in my mind. Indeed Budd Hopkins, no less, had told me it may mask a real abduction if I explored it. No surprise that.

The hypnosis was revealing as much in a negative sense as it was in a positive one. I was able to see how a CE4 could come together in the mind from an innocuous light (and - as warned - a full blown abduction did emerge in later dreams after the minor incident revealed under hypnosis). More than that, I was able to check specific data (such as days of the week, things I did next day and so on) under hypnosis - knowing I had no conscious memory of these things but records where I could establish the truth. At least 50% of the 'facts' I revealed under hypnosis were thus shown to be fantasy - not reality. Obviously this was a crucial lesson to absorb.

I felt this episode (of which this is but a part) was extremely revealing about the abduction experience; although evidently Robert Hale and those people who read this censored chapter were less impressed. Now that I had summarised it in Northern UFO News I seemed to have hit another nerve. One reader wrote to tell me that I was backing off from my previous admission - that I really knew the terrible truth but was either afraid to say, or was being paid for silence. Neither was the case. Nor was this sequel editorial a backtrack. It was a simple expression of things that had occurred which I thought important. Coupled with things I did not go into in the editorial it showed me how the UFO mystery plumbed deeper waters.

About the same time that I explored this hypnotic experiment with a Stockport psychologist, I concluded a book entitled 'Children of the Armageddon'. This was written under contract for a British publisher. In it I developed some of the things that were bubbling to the surface and of which the abduction experiment formed but a part. It offered a fairly radical departure from much I had said before about UFOs, proposing that there were key people - many not being aware of this - who had buried memories of communication with an intelligence, and who would be triggered one day. It is something that I have had reasons to suspect for a while.

This is the only book of mine a publisher has ever rejected in seeming horror. In fact, they were so desperate to get rid of it they actually paid me the money due from the rest of the contract so they did not have to publish it! This is a somewhat unusual state of affairs to say the least, and I knew then my writing said something that must bite deep.

I never made a serious effort to find another publisher (which in retrospect was odd) although I did complete a science-fiction story which skirted round some of the issues and is in fact just the opening gambit of a more detailed fictional presentation on the theme that I have sketched out. This story, entitled 'A Fear of Thunder', was actually published in New Moon, a science-fiction quarterly, in Summer 1988, and it was interesting to see

reader response from straight science-fiction fans in later issues, as nobody suspected it was anything other than a story about phobias. What Budd Hopkins would make of it, I can but guess!

The rejected non-fiction book has over the past four years had a kind of underground readership amongst the new age community. I have had letters from various people who have read it claiming its importance, One well known ufologist has even taken on the task of agent for the manuscript (unsuccessfully as far as I know) as he felt so strongly that it needed publication. I have experienced a curiously detached observation of all this.

Now all of this may look like waffle around the point, and not relevant to my sudden revelation. But it is meant to show that there has not been any dramatic turnabout in the recent past. Over four or five years I have gradually been forced into this position - painted into a corner by the phenomenon itself. In Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved (1990) I tried desperately with Paul Fuller to fight it and prove once and for all to my own satisfaction that the entire UFO mystery can be resolved as IFOs and UAP. Whilst a lot of what is in that book remains valid and I do not withdraw nearly all of it, I think reviewers knew (and I certainly saw) that the concept worked well most of the way - but not if applied all of the way. In the end if you were honest you had to accept that there was more to it than a few earthlights, Meaden vortices, misidentifications of satellites and a lot of old wishful thinking.

In the two theoretical books written in recent years the signs are there. Whilst 'Abduction' rejects - I still feel correctly - the standard EI interpretation of alien Neil Armstrongs landing in NASA shuttles, in the end it argues that the abduction probably was a phenomenon occurring at an inner space level, but being triggered by communication with another intelligence. It seems unequivocal in what the book says.

Even more crucial to me was my 1990 book 'Mind Monsters', published by Aquarian. This has had less response in the literature than any of my previous books. I have seen almost no reviews. Yet I felt at the time it was the most important thing I had brought out. Authors are notoriously bad at judging their own work, but certainly this book explains my current thinking better than anything I could say here.

I am not talking of a simple alien contact - but instead a combination of the right people being in the right place at the right time where they interact directly at the level of consciousness with the actual basis of quantum matter. The result is the forging of an alien reality which represents a blend between personal psychodrama and external communication from another

source. In other words, the ET reality of UFOs is triggered by alien contact, but is brought into our experience as a result of cultural trends and belief structures, and through the manipulative effect of those 'children of the Armageddon'. They are key witnesses who act as mediums for the message as well as being the architects who forge the UFO reality which the rest of us can share. As a result the evidence is always more than non-existent but less than probative. It is always tantalising, but never convincing. It is enough to show that something running deep is going on, but not enough to persuade us that it must be the most obvious and blatant intrusions by alien beings.

There has to be an alien component, but equally we cannot reject the clear evidence that the ESP potential of the witness is crucial to what takes place, nor that the form of the experience is tempered and honed by cultural imagery and psychological beliefs.

The result is the confusing mess of a UFO mystery. There are countless IFOs. There are many different UAP. But beyond that there are also alien contacts, occurring via responsive people. These are not merely mediums - but physical mediums. And they are creating UFOs like their counterparts once created intangible spirits. The event comes from us, but speaks the words of others.



# Do we have a spirit?

by Chris Harvey

"Not the moment or the pain, but the being out of reach" (1)

This is how Hubert Van Zeller poignantly describes what is the core of our fear of the body's death. It's at the back of all our minds, and can jump out and terrify us just when we think we've forgotten it in the routine of daily living: there is some item on the news about a senseless death; or we have to face the more immediate tragedy of the passing of a relative or friend. Even strong religious convictions can crumble when faced with death: many recent studies have shown a total lack of true conviction about traditional doctrines amongst regular churchgoers. (2). This is our common, deepest fear: that the 'me' will end - all our relationships, ambitions and memories will be blown away on the wind. Thinking about it, in the words of Philip Larkin, "dulls to distance all we are." (3)

As well as the fear, there is our natural human curiosity - our great birthright. Both these motivate us to look at death, and to find if, indeed, that is just "it" - no more "us". An alternative view is that we have a "spirit" - which I shall define as "a non-corporeal centre of individual consciousness". It is this kind of "spirit" that parapsychology wants to investigate - the evidence for the survival of the "me". Other ideas of what "spirit" means, and whether our individuality eventually dissolves into the Cosmos or somehow transmutes, I will leave to one side. With the kind of evidence we're looking for, and which is nearest to allaying our immediate concern with survival, which is also easiest to digest - we can dispense with further metaphysical speculations until later.

Firstly, a bit of philosophy. Descartes, the founder of modern philosophy, had a view of human beings which we know as dualism. This means that the body is a shell which "we" inhabit, since our essential nature is not physical. This idea is enshrined in the words "sum res cogitans" - "I am only a thing that thinks." (5) In other words, I could do without the body, but I would still be me. (by "thinking" Descartes means any mental processes at all.)

Now this is not a very popular view in philosophy. How, precisely, does this "thinking thing" or spirit move the body around then? And why are we capable of feeling very real pain - not to mention brain damage leading to, apparently, damage of this supposed "spirit" in our ability to live normally? Descartes and his followers couldn't really come up with good answers to this (5) - which in the scientific spirit of the age meant testable answers, provable answers. The prevailing philosophical position today is structuralism - the theory that our consciousness is simply and

physically created by the structure of our physical brains. When the brain dies, so do we.

Let's be pragmatic here. Our culture is no longer very simple. The absolutes and dogmas of any one religion can easily be questioned. But then, the idea that hard science says all there is to say about us seems somehow unpalatable. All the things that really matter to us seem to get missed out of the science books - love, beauty, the possibilities of higher levels of reality. Walt Whitman said: "You shall no longer take things at second or third hand . . . nor feed on spectres in books: You shall listen to all sides and filter them for yourself." (6) I take this to mean - don't take for granted either the religious dogma about life after death, or the "scientific worldview" - but rather, take every opportunity to do practical research into firsthand evidence.

Parapsychology, which in the academic world is disappearing up its own backside, needs case histories and first-hand reports - and plenty of them.

The good thing about a scientific theory is, that you only need one counterexample for it to be false. If my theory is, for instance, that all men have black hair, then you only have to show me one who doesn't, and you have forced me to change my theory. The reason I am dwelling on this is simple: although it's quite understandable that people reject the notion of life after death, not having had any direct paranormal experiences of it themselves, I think after years of study in this area that the evidence shows that we do have a spirit.

For the record, here is my counterexample:

"A young man has a visual experience, very vivid, of leaving his body. He sees it lying there on the bed with him standing over it. He then has the sensation of flying over some hills and entering a strange house: he notes several details of the bathroom. On awakening, he immediately records his experience and shows the record to three independent witnesses. Three weeks later, he is invited to see a house newly purchased by his grandfather. Before entering, he is able to give a detailed and accurate description of the inside. The description fits - both the house and, in all respects, the written record. His grandfather had not seen the house at the time of his original experience. He concludes that his consciousness functioned independently of his body - in simple terms - that he has a spirit."

This is the kind of thing which convinces me as an academic, as well as philosophically (the young man's conclusion seems correct) and personally (this experience happened, in fact, to me.) The interesting thing is, that there seem to be numerous similar "counterexamples" throughout history and cultures.

Finally, many people sceptical of the paranormal fall back on

what I mentioned at the beginning of this article: our fear of death. Surely we have such a vested interest in believing in the afterlife, that we can just make it all up. I agree most strongly that we can easily fall prey to what Freud coined "wish fulfillment." (7) All those cases of exploitation at times of grief by fraudulent mediums testify to this. But to bring some good philosophy in: "the motivations for a belief do not effect either the truth or falsity of that belief." If my belief in the spirit is just the fear of death, then the sceptic's disbelief is just the fear of the unknown - and we can't solve anything. I think we can get close to an answer about life after death. We can take Whitman's advice: "re-examine what you have been told at school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul."

#### References

- (1) Considerations 1974 p.19
- (2) Kennedy, David: A Venture in Immortality
- (3) 'Ambulances' in The Whitsun Weddings
- (4) see Meditations 1 - 6
- (5) He thought the answer lay in the pineal gland - but admitted that this was only speculation
- (6) Leaves of Grass

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## Back Issues

Issues One, Two and Three are still available. Briefly, their contents have included: -

Issue 1 Kevin McClure on Possession and Exorcism - Michael Goss on Spirit Guides - Hilary Evans on the cause of the UFO experience - Satanic Child Abuse - End Times Bulletin - The Kansas City Prophets - UFO Abductions - Extensive Journal Abstracts and Contact Information.

Issue 2 The State of Modern Spiritualism - Andy Roberts with Subterranean Homesick Greys - are aliens alive and well, and living in the U.S.A.? - Jerry Randles on the power, and the politics, behind crop circles - the extreme religious press considered in Cross Talk - When I'm Calling Cthulhu - End Times Bulletin: Alien Contact or Armageddon? - Extensive Journal Abstracts and Contact Information.

Issue 3 Visions and Interventions in World War I by Kevin McClure - Belief: A Key to Magick by Phil Hine - End Times Bulletin: Alien Predictions of Doom and Disaster by Martin Kottmeyer - professional SF writers David Langford and John Grant look at the mythology of UFO abductions and crashed flying saucers - Love and Money: the New Age - the extreme religious press considered in Cross Talk - Extensive Journal Abstracts and Contact Information in News From The Front.

## NEWS FROM THE FRONT

I've accepted readers' advice, and included the information for sending for all these titles along with the reviews/contents listings.

This section is getting very long, and is likely to get longer - the more I send for, the more leads there are for other publications. But many of you have said how useful News From The Front is to you, and as we are now the only place where a comprehensive listing is appearing, I think that we should stick with it! Indeed, if there are any magazines that you feel we have missed, please send in details . . .

Ancient Skies - Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society Brief, but neatly done, with succinct features on the Nazca Lines, Ancient Astronauts in Iceland, the Antikythera Computer and a Martian Stonehenge. For members of the Ancient Astronaut Society, 1921 St John's Ave, Highland Park, Illinois 60035-3105, U.S.A.

Annals of the Enquiring Vol.2 No.5. The customary, lively Fortean mix, with many brief and punchy pieces of research, and possible cosmologies. 6-issue sub £7.50 from Gerry Lovell, 8, St.John Street, Wells, Somerset.

Anomaly - ASSAP Journal of Research into the Paranormal No.9. Produced to a high standard, this issue records apparently successful research - complete with circuit diagram - in the field of the Electronic Voice Phenomenon. However, the EVP is always frustrating, and the results exclude any comprehensible communication. There is also much on Street Light Interference - an anomaly almost unheard of till investigators sought it out. The advice that "Would-be investigators without technical knowledge of street lighting should be dissuaded from attempting any personal investigations of the lamp itself" seems eminently sensible! Free to members of ASSAP, £1.50 to others from Hugh Pincott, ASSAP Secretary, 20, Paul St, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX.

The Black Flame - International Forum of the Church of Satan. Double issue - Vol.3 Nos 1 & 2. Peter Gilmore's editorial sets the tone from the outset, "Satanism is not Humanism. We view our entire species as one that is presently riddled with corruption and in need of Darwinian purification . . . Anything that promotes large-scale depopulation is a boon to our present situation." And so on . . .

As smartly produced a magazine as you could wish for, carrying everything from an interview with Tiny Tim to a paean of praise to Gordon Liddy. However, there's also too much of Charles Manson and Adolf Hitler for mental or physical health. Why is it that those who are convinced of their own superiority choose gross and utter failures as heroes? \$7 from P.O. Box 499, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10101 - 0499, U.S.A.

Cambridge, Ontario UFO Research Group Newsletter No.37. Not so much a newsletter as 70+ A4 pages of accessible UFO material, some completely original, but much copied and reprinted from obscure and unusual sources, together with photos and some great cartoons. I can't find a price - I know the postage alone was about \$5! From Bonnie Wheeler, 170, Strathcona Street, Cambridge, Ontario N3C 1R4.

The Christian-New Age Quarterly - A bridge supporting dialogue, Vol.4 No.1 This could only be American - bright, optimistic, covering a difficult area of crossover in a very personal way. It makes a welcome change from the usual Fundamentalist ravings about the New Age, and many New Agers' blind loathing of established faiths. Sample copy \$5 from P.O.Box 276, Clifton, NJ 07011-0276, U.S.A.

The Christian Parapsychologist Dec.1991. One of their more academic issues; the feature articles are 'The Shepherd Psalm as a Near-Death Experience', and 'Is the Near-Death Experience a visit to The Kingdom Within?' Not easy going, but worthwhile, and leavened by the usual excellent letters and reviews. £1.25 from CFPSS, The Priory, 44, High Street, New Romney, Kent.

The Circular - including information from the Centre for Crop Studies. Vol.2 Nos 3 & 4. Any regular Wild Places reader will know I have little time for crop circles, but I have nothing but respect for Bob Kingsley's editorship of this professional-style journal. It essentially seeks and supports a non-mundane cause for many of the circles, but it also says why and how, and maintains a fair balance. I'm sorry to see that Bob will no longer be editing, and would recommend either of these issues. £1.75 from 58, King's Road, West End, Woking, Surrey GU24 9LW.

The Crop Watcher Issues 7, 8 & 9. Nominally at the sceptical end of Cropdom, but not to the detriment of reason and understanding. An instinctive leaning towards reports of hoaxes and the activities of sceptics mixes with good historical material and some valuable transcriptions of key media events dealing with the phenomenon. I hope that all the crop circle publications keep going through this coming summer, as there is still vital material to be collated about how attitudes to phenomena start, develop and - probably - fade away. They could, together, form the most important source since the legendary When Prophecy Fails. Which it usually does! £1.50 an issue, from 3, Selborne Court, Tavistock Close, Romsey, Hants SO51 7TY.

Elsewhen - Exploring Mysteries of Time and Space Issue 9. I've long been fascinated by the possibility of time travel, though I guess it doesn't really happen - not even to alien abductors! I enjoyed this - particularly a lively, continuing column on Time Travel in Literature. There's also more general paranormal and Fortean material, including hints on field work - a rarity these days. About \$3 an issue from the Temporal Anomaly Research Association, P.O.Box 20173, Keizer, OR 97307-0173, U.S.A.

Evidence - The Magazine in Support of Psychic Science. No.1. Dec.1991. Produced, I think, under the guiding hand of Michael Roll, an important figure in the philosophy of Spiritualism/psychism at present. First, I must stress that the opinions presented in Evidence - and in Michael's column in Psychic News - warrant careful reading. They link the possibilities presented in subatomic physics by scientists now, with the assertion that the earlier scientists who investigated and accepted physical seance-room phenomena can't possibly have been mistaken. Carol Harvey Wellington edits, and contributes some excellent factual articles, but Michael's own 'The Spiritualist Movement has been comprehensively infiltrated and destroyed by the sworn enemies of Arthur Findlay and Sir William Crookes' slips over the line into diatribe. Maybe it's too simple a conclusion to draw, but if there's no physical phenomena now - and there probably isn't - I'm going to take some persuading that there was any phenomena then. Science or no science, proof's proof. Send £1 to Michael Roll, 28, Westerleigh Road, Downend, Bristol, BS16 6AH.

Fortean Times Continuing its successful incarnation in the nation's news-agents, two more excellent issues have appeared. Both feature a multitude of strange, anomalous, and sometimes downright tasteless events plus . . . No.60 John Michell and others on the mysteries of the Glastonbury Thorn, an intelligent interview with UFO abduction/folklore expert Eddie Bullard, Jewish fish legends, a good ghost story, and some excellent columns. No.61 America Before Columbus - early explorers, a great feature on cats who lose their owners and find them again over vast distances, and much more. FT's illustrations are becoming even better! FT should be available through any coherent newsagent, or for £2 from SKS, 20, Paul St, Frome, Somerset, BA11 1DX.

Foafale News - Newsletter of the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research No.23. Always one of my favourites, this features some more brilliant research from Eastern Europe - Polish legends about HIV-infected People, running amok, infecting the pure, innocent and holy. There's more 'Black Ambulance' abduction legends from Sicily, stolen body organs, more references for Satanic Ritual Abuse in the UK, and miraculous billboards. Foafale News is a benefit of membership of the ISCLR - please send £10 for a tear to Sandy Hobbs, Applied Social Studies, Paisley College, High Street, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA1 2BE.

The Gate Oct.1991 'Explore the Mysteries' is the subtitle, and without pretensions, that's what this pleasant Ohio journal does. UFOs, poltergeists, reincarnation and some quality reviews and news reports. Say \$3 for a sample issue to Beth Robbins, The Gate, P.O.Box 43518, Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143, U.S.A.

Ghost Trackers Newsletter Feb.1992 'The Official Paranormal Publication of the Ghost Research Society' Well, I don't know about 'paranormal publication' - it seems pretty normal to me! But for those with an interest in modern ghosts, and their investigation, this will be no disappointment. Membership of the Society costs \$12 including 3 issues of the newsletter from Dale D.Kaczmarek, P.O.Box 205, Oaklawn, IL 60454-0205, U.S.A.

Hidden History Vol.3 No.4. An interesting mix - The Druids, Myth & History, Holy Wells & Celtic Saints, the Ritual Deaths of Anglo-Saxon Kings, reviews and other short items. Usefully illustrated, too. 4-issue sub £5.50 from 5, Frederick Avenue, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1HP.

International UFO Reporter Jan/Feb 1992. Journal of the Center for UFO Studies. Unfailingly the best UFO publication around, this is an excellent issue, with editor Jerome Clark looking at 'dark side' ufology and the cattle mutilation farrago, Keith Basterfield on the extraordinary claims of implanted abductees, two (incomprehensibly) pieces on the Gulf Breeze UFOs, and a snappy symposium on 'Ufology in Crisis'. Those last two items may be subtly linked! Single issue \$6 from CUFOS, 2457, West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659, U.S.A.

The Leading Edge - Intelligence Highlights. The subtitle is a laugh - if you want to know if someone is mildly eccentric or completely out of their tree, give them this to read, and watch their reaction. If they believe more than 10% of it . . . There's dozens of pages of wild conspiracy theory, abductions, interferences, a copy of the U.S. Constitution, plans for a UFO Radio Recorder Beam Receiver, and much, much more. Around \$15 from Leading Edge Research, P.O.Box 481-MU58, Yelm, Washington State 98597, U.S.A.

The Ley Hunter - The Journal of Geomancy and Earth Mysteries. No.117. I must be less sceptical. There's absolutely nothing wrong with TLH, and this issue has an enterprising piece on the Wieuwert Mystery (perfect preservation of a corpse). straight lines on Anglesey, columns by Paul Screeton, Nigel Pennick and Chris Ashton, an account of Moot '91, and yards of reviews. Most of this is close to mainstream anomaly research - it's just enterprises like the Dragon Project with its supposedly heavy significances that fail to either ignite or convince me! TLH is as good as you'll get in this field - £7 for four issues from P.O.Box 92, Penzance, Cornwall, TR18 2XL.

Magonia March 1992. Yet another corking issue, tackling both the key issues in ufology, and also the contemporary Satanism scare, with Roger Sandell reviewing media treatments, and stupid, credulous new books. Hilary Evans comes down heavily on Eddie Bullard's folkloristic approach to UFO abductors & the letters column takes a broad but incisive approach to the detail of the crop circle phenomenon. £4.00 for four issues to John Rimmer, John Dee Cottage, 5, James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, SW14 8HB.

The Messenger - A Magazine for the Golden Age. Vol.11 A straightforward U.S. magazine, somewhere in the middle ground between Spiritualism, metaphysics and channelling, with an overriding sense that several somebodies 'out there' are deeply concerned about our situation and our futures. Send \$2 for a sample issue to Lily O'Donnell, Editor, 1936 SW63 Terrace, Pompano Beach, Florida 33068, U.S.A.

Meyn Mamvro - Ancient Stones and Sacred Sites in Cornwall No.16. Neat and unusually well-illustrated, this issue has a long feature on various earth mystery features of the Isles of Scilly, Crop Circle News, Tintagel and Boscastle (the wonderful Witches' Museum is closing down), and more. £1.50 from Cheryl Straffon, 51, Carn Bosavern, St.Just, Penzance, Cornwall, TR197QX.

The Missing Link - Direct Communication with Extraterrestrial Tro! Jan.1992. Edited by Aileen Garoutte, this is more contactee experience than channelling, and is the more interesting for that. The messages, which seem to arrive by post, are written in a form of English with which Stanley Unwin would be at ease, and remind me of some Aetherian material. The sender(s) travel round the Earth, and the letters from Tro seem to be distributed around a keen and eager network. Recipients send in lively and provoking replies, and I guess that in due course they'll be answered! I'm quite intrigued by all these transactions, and will hope to keep you in touch with developments. I guess \$4 to UFO Contact Center International, 3001 S.288th, Suite 304, Federal Way, WA 98003, U.S.A. should bring you a sample copy.

Mystical Realms Winter 1991. Lee Richards has produced a neat magazine with a West Country flavour, and says some nice things about TWP - thanks! Steven Shipp tackles Strange Dartmoor, Anthony North quirks of memory and perception, and Michael C.Daniels something of the history and derivatives of the Goat-Foot God. There's potential here - keep up the good work! £1.50 from Lee Richards, Myrtle Cottage, Fore St, Sidbury, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 OSD.

The New Abyss - Hollow Earth End-Time News No.2. You won't be amazed to know this is American, and if there's a case to be made for a Hollow Earth, then this makes it quite well, with illustrations and intriguing commentary. The 'End-Time' aspect - based on the cover-up of a forthcoming polar shift - is more obscure, but is still backed by quotes from scientists, and a fair biblio-graphy. Shaver it ain't - so we can be grateful for that! There's no

price, but I imagine you should send about \$5 to Ruth A.Leedy, RD3, Box 240-B, Dover, DE 19901, U.S.A.

The Noah's Ark Society for Physical Mediumship Newsletter No.14. I know that many individuals (me included) hope for the return of physical mediumship - ectoplasm, direct voice, trumpets, hands, pretty smiles and the rest. Much trust is being placed in the Noah's Ark Society to make this breakthrough, but what little I have gleaned to date seems to be of minimal results, obtained after much effort, and in total darkness. The newsletter is certainly interesting, but the information is largely historical. Somehow, evidence is mostly limited to apports - surely the most easily manipulated and unconvincing of phenomena - especially when things are so dull that, "the sitters were delighted to receive an apport (found after a blank sitting, under the trumpet) of a half-eaten biscuit." Write to the Noah's Ark Society, Street Farmhouse, Scole, Nr. Diss, Norfolk, IP21 4DR.

Northern Earth Mysteries No.48. An interesting historical piece on the mysterious 'Dacre's Bears', C.S.Hay's intriguing and well-researched 'Network of Ancient and Prehistoric Sites in Britain' and 'The Gytrash of Goathland' feature in this issue, along with news, letters, reviews and the rest. £1.15 from 40b, Welby Place, Meersbrook Park, Sheffield, S8 9DB.

Northern UFO News No.152 Dec.1991. Jenny Randles - featured in these pages - provides information about her own UFO experiences (it'll be John Rimmer in 'Magonia' next!), Crop Circles. book reviews, reviews of UFOs in the media, and plenty of case reports - and there's not many places you can find them these days. £6 for 6 issues from 37, Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 0UP.

Notes from the Hangar No.2 The quarterly magazine of the National UFO Museum. The Museum doesn't exist yet, but if it happens, it should be pretty zany! This is a good, chunky magazine with lots of pages, letters, oodles of offbeat ads, and features including Earth vs. the Flying Saucers, the Exo-Biological Intervention Hypothesis, UFO Repetitions, Canadian UFO capture, The Mysterious U.S. Base of Pine Gap, and plenty more. Try \$7 to NUFOM, P.O.Box 20593, Sun Valley, NV89433, U.S.A.

Oracle No.1. A new U.K. mass-market glossy magazine, available in newsagents. It's better than the awful 'Lifelines' and being astrology-based, probably stands a better chance of survival. It's attractively presented, not unintelligent, and has a reasonable feature on stone circles. What saddens me is the awful goods and services offered in the adverts, particularly the 0898 lines offering all sorts of readings and spells. Even the ads for items run along the same lines - everything from Amazing Egg Rituals to endless computer printouts of non-human astrological readings. It makes me despair of our field of interest ever achieving any respect at all.

Orbiter Issue 33. The New England Aerial Phenomena Report. I'll parade a prejudice here, and say that I particularly like this magazine. Its 12 pages are intelligent, interesting, and full of good sense, and there's even a neat colour photo on the front! Fairly sceptical, it deals with the 1989 Belgian UFO wave, the absurdities of Gulf Breeze (aren't they lucky the 'events' took place somewhere with such a pretty name - wouldn't have caught on in Crawley), and a good set of letters dealing with La Paz. Yes Jim, I'd love to exchange! \$3 to Jim Melescuic, P.O.Box 652, Reading, MA 18067, U.S.A.

Pagan News Feb.1992 No sooner do I announce that it's gone than it's back, bigger and better than ever! I'm no pagan - I'm no anything in particular -

but this is always one of my favourites. Broadminded, provocative, funny and balanced, this issue features editor Phil Hine on psychic questing (anyone want to write a stiff article on the subject for TWP?), Runes, Women's Spirituality, an interview with Maxine Sanders, the occult in Australia, Power Dressing for Pagans ("Psychic Youths tend to be short, with shaved heads and tattoos, and easily identified by the mixture of clanking and muffled gasps of agony emerging from the portaloo's") and some good reviews. £1.50 from Phoenix Publications, P.O.Box 196, London, WC1A 2DY.

Pendragon Winter 1991 Plenty about Cadbury - including a fine reprint from 1894 - in this tight-packed Arthurian melange. Also Arthur of Brittany, The Wild Hunt, The Fisher King and Odin, and more. 4-issue sub £6 from Eddie Tooke, Chinook, Paxhill Lane, Twynning, Glos, GL20 6DU.

The Scientific and Medical Network Newsletter No.47. Apologies to David Lorimer, the Editor, for missing this one out last issue. 60 pages long, professionally produced, I'm always amazed by the complex crossover between the scientific intellects that write for it, and the rather simplistic New Age beliefs that are often evinced. However, the coverage of events and the wide-ranging reviews are invaluable, and I guess we're all entitled to our beliefs, even when they're at odds with our knowledge and experience. For costs, write to David Lorimer, 9, Julier House, Pera Road, Bath, BA1 5PA.

The Skeptic Vol.5 No.6 This is produced to a very high standard, and has improved markedly, in line with the breadth of knowledge of its very literate contributors. Here we have 'Rolling Your Own in Wiltshire', a long and unfalsifiable article by one of the thoroughly subversive Wessex Sceptics, Sue Blackmore on visual illusions, an excellent piece on the dangers of over- and under-describing, Alternative Medicine in Europe, and more. Committed now to persuasion rather than diatribe, this is well worth having. Send £2 to P.O.Box 475, Manchester M60 2TH.

The Skeptics UFO Newsletter No.10. Edited by Philip J.Klass, lovable skeptic and all-round debunker, this is a bit pricey for 4 x A4 sheets, but very useful nonetheless. Naturally, there is much here about Gulf Breeze and Roswell, which both cry out for effective debunking, and other useful bits & pieces. \$20 for 6 issues (airmail) from Philip J.Klass, 404 'N' St, SW, Washington DC 20024, U.S.A.

Strange Phenomena Investigations Nov/Dec 1991. 36 pages of slightly amateur but lively features on all sorts of paranormal phenomena and events: psychic photographs, Yeti, UFOs, Project Urquart, Patrick Moore, the Virgin Mary in Hungary and Jenny Randles in Atlantis! £1.50 from Malcolm Robinson, 41, The Braes, Tullibody, Clackmannanshire, FK10 2TT, Scotland.

The Star Beacon - Earth Star's Monthly Newsletter. I have 4 issues here, each 8 neat pages long, and featuring a variety of phenomena including, unusually, some UFO & spirit photographs. I wouldn't put money on their authenticity, but it's rare enough just to see any! UFOs, Spiritualism, ghosts and channeling are all represented, and it's interesting to see what George Meek - of Spiricom fame - is involved in now. Send \$2 to Earth Star Publications, P.O. Box 117, Paoula, CO 81428, U.S.A.

UFO Magazine Vol.6. No.6 This issue of this excellent, glossy, California journal features 'Benevolent ET's' - an interesting counter-balance to all the 'dark side' ufology being forced on us. I don't, however, find them any more credible than their grey and grumpy brethren, and it is still the investi-

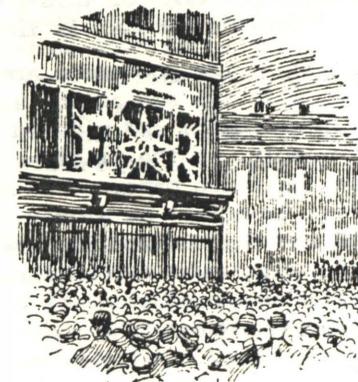
gative and news items here that are of considerable value to research. \$5 to California UFO, 1536 S.Robertson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90035, U.S.A.

UFO Brigantia No.50. Congratulations to one of our best publications on achieving its half-century. The customary 'Golden Implant' is on its way to the Editor. This is a fine and disturbing issue, presenting in a fair and balanced way two impressive features by abduction supremo, Budd Hopkins. It's hard to be cynical about material - however weird - presented in such a sane and reasonable way, and maybe the best response I can come up with, is that when an individual makes such a grand job of caring for the first echelon of abductees, supporting them, valuing and confirming their beliefs, then it's no surprise that others seek out the same concern and response. If, say, Phil Klass or Hilary Evans had been in Hopkins' place at the beginning of this extraordinary abduction business, would it have sustained or developed in the same way? I strongly suspect not. And if not, why not? This thought-provoking document is £2 from 84, Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorks, HD6 2QR.

UFO Debate Vol.3.No.1. Omnipresent investigator Clive Potter joins the editorial team from this issue. Robert Moore contributes a broad and very useful article on the creation of crop circles, there's a piece on the rock band CEIV, and an imaginative 'New UFO Classification System' that takes account of all the interactive factors that have developed over recent years. £1.40 to David Barclay, 46, Prospect Walk, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 2LR.

Voices from Spirit Simply produced, and just 4 double-sided sheets, this is an intriguing title, of which I've now received several. Apart from some philosophy, ads, and the odd short story, most of the material is channelled/transmitted by a wide and amazing selection of famous people of the past, who will also answer questions from readers! Recent communicators have included Lou Costello, Queen Nefertiti, Calamity Jane, Pope Pius XII and the Gods and Goddesses of Asgard. Good grief! Send \$2 to P.O.Box 533065, Orlando, Florida 32853, U.S.A.

Would You Believe? - The Controversial Phenomena Magazine Issues 38, 39 & 40. I haven't seen this before, and it's rather good. It's mostly reprints, of Fortean, UFO and paranormal material from a variety of old and obscure sources - Weird Tales, Amazing Stories, Fate, Flying Saucers, and lots more that I've never heard of. These are well-chosen, interesting and useful, and mixed with current news and features make a worthwhile magazine. Send \$5 to Armand A.Laprade, HC 80, Box 156, Marshall, Arkansas 72650, U.S.A.



# Psi and Religion; the historical connection

by Leslie Price

The interpretation of psychic phenomena, including mediumship, changes over time. Professor E.R.Dodds, the classicist and SPR president well appreciated this. A trance personality addressed as a god in the Greek Mysteries became a demon to the early Christians, a guide to Victorian Spiritualists, and a secondary personality to psychologists. Today it might channel readings in California, and make its 'vehicle' a millionaire.

To illustrate how attitudes change, consider three presidents of the College of Psychic Studies - formerly the College of Psychic Science and before that the London Spiritualist Alliance. They are Stainton Moses, the founder president in 1884, Arthur Findlay who served in 1934 and resigned in anger; and Paul Beard, the architect of the present college who retired in 1982. Each has had a significant literary output.

Stainton Moses, a schoolmaster and former clergyman was a private mental and physical medium, active in psychic organisations. He was for example a founder vice-president of the SPR and chaired Council meetings on occasion. After his death FWH Myers contributed a highly respectful paper on his phenomena to the SPR's Proceedings. Moses came to believe, though not without doubt, that a group of eminent figures from religious and cultural history were associated with his phenomena, and that his chief guide was Malachi, the prophet whose name is attached to the last book of the Jewish Bible. Any assessment of the reality of these entities must take account of their full range - there were said to be 49 of them in the group - and for this purpose, Trethewy's survey, 'The Controls of Stainton Moses' is indispensable.

Moses attempted to understand the phenomena around him and the wider Spiritualist scene with its sensations and exposures. He was a medium of acute intelligence and wide education, reading the Latin poet Virgil for example, in the original, while his hand wrote messages. In his collected papers 'The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism' and 'Spirit Identity' he argued that the modern movement was purposeful and that behind it were the same celestial forces - including Jesus - who had inspired the Old and New Testaments; that the spiritual conditions of the modern world resembled those of the first century and that the new revelation would undergo much change before finally being absorbed into society. It might seem unlikely (he admitted) that Spiritualism

had so noble a destiny, but then the prospects of the first Christians would also have appeared poor to observers at the time.

There was already in the time of Stainton Moses a strain of radical, sectarian or plebian Spiritualists for whom mediumship suggested a revolution in social arrangements and a rejection of establishment religion. Professor Logie Barrow in his book 'Independent Spirits' describes their progress. Stainton Moses, however, preferred the London-based upper-class groups for whom psychic phenomena were, in the main, an addition to existing dilute beliefs.

Arthur Findlay was born in 1883 into a prosperous Glasgow family, the son of Scottish Presbyterian parents, against whose faith he rebelled. As a young man he was introduced to Rationalism and in the leisure from a successful business career, familiarised himself with comparative religion, especially the history of religions school then fashionable, which emphasised how much Christianity had borrowed from pagan religions. In 1918 he came by apparent chance, not connected with the War or immediate bereavement, into contact with Spiritualism, and with a outstanding voice medium called John Sloan, who gave him convincing survival evidence. From time to time incidentally, Findlay accused the SPR of declining a chance to investigate Sloan, in spite of attempts by Mr Salter in the Journal to correct his version of events.

After great success as a stockbroker investing in the new oil industry, Findlay moved to the milder climate of Stansted in Essex. He began to express his new convictions in a series of lectures, pamphlets, articles and books. He did not become a Christian of any kind - far from it! He added to his Rationalism so that, for example, the common phenomenon of saviour god religions was explained by the hypothesis of an apparition of a dead person triggering off the faith. Indeed, he looked at the whole world-wide occurrence of religion with the insight that an experience of psi gave and emphasised - perhaps overemphasised - the seminal role of such phenomena in the generation of religious belief, and the choking of genuine inspiration by malign priestcraft. His writings must be taken seriously because of his experience, lucidity, and wide reading (including on occasion research at the British Museum), and they were rightly reviewed on publication in the SPR Journal. Unfortunately there is no published recent assessment of them.

In 1934, Findlay became president of the London Spiritualist Alliance, but resigned when a lecture he gave on Christian origins led to a dispute. (The chronology he gives of this event in his valuable autobiography 'Looking Back' first issued in 1955, is not entirely supported by the contemporary record

in Light). The ethos of the LSA was still Anglican. Findlay had become the financial sustainer of the weekly Psychic News, and although he did not intend it, contributed to the form of a kind of Spiritualist orthodoxy which bore at least a slight resemblance to the rigidity of his parents' faith.

Some of his books have been lately reprinted and reflect what was known and thought about religion and psi up to 1939, though students should note that successive reprints of some titles such as 'Rock of Truth' were slightly revised without this always being acknowledged. He cannot take account of such later developments as the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi gnostic documents, and the rise of pentecostalism which offers a better clue to many early Christian writings than does modern mediumship.

Paul Beard, who became president of the College, as it now was, in 1966, was also a successful businessman. He had enjoyed the privilege of sitting with outstanding trance mediums and their guides over many years, and had also studied the work of theosophical seers such as Rudolf Steiner and Alice Bailey (one of the first writers on the Aquarian Age) and of depth psychologists such as Jung. He made clear in his first book 'Survival of Death' (1965) and in occasional articles in Psychic News that he was dissatisfied with popular Spiritualism which in various ways, such as the use of churches, was a Piscean echo of the older denominations

Unlike Stainton Moses and Arthur Findlay he accepted rebirth and made it part of the outlook he recommended. In a world where orthodoxies were less influential, he wasted no time on argument about religious history. Although group work was important, the relation between the individual and his spirit guide was emphasised, moving gradually indeed from outer communication via a sensitive to inner communion. The psychic and the spiritual were thus related in a way for which Myers and even Hodgson before his death, might have had some sympathy. Apart from his trilogy of major books, Paul Beard has continued to explore the significance of mediumship in many contributions to Light over the years.

Three presidents, different generations, developing views. How will the religious significance of psi look to a later president? The age of the great trance medium has passed. Now, the channellers are with us. As Joe Fisher reminds us in his book 'Hungry Ghosts' they are not necessarily truthful or benign. The religious boddies, too, have changed. Without going overboard for the paranormal, they are increasingly ready to give it a place, to let celestial geography proceed rationally in the way that eventually they had to permit the earthly geographers.

There is a powerful fundamentalist backlash, however, which, among other concerns, has discovered the New Age a generation later than the emergence of the concept as common currency in the psychic scene. It would be wise to listen carefully to both critics and defenders of the alleged religious significance of psi.

One point which has assisted the fundamentalist rejection of psi, or the paranormal as a category, has been the inability of researchers to specify the conditions that produce phenomena, or the mechanisms involved. This contrasts, as we all know, with the progress in other areas of (much better funded) science. The fundamentalist may say this shows that the phenomena are produced by wicked non-human spirits. It is not possible to dismiss this idea out of hand, because experienced researchers from William Crookes and William Barrett to Guy Playfair, have supported this view in relation to a proportion of phenomena, though not of course all. Moreover, so eminent a parapsychologist as John Beloff has been struck by the resemblance between psychic practitioners and sorcerers or shamen.

A term such as non-human spirit, demon or elemental does not have much if any scientific meaning. It is even more nebulous than those of human survival and reincarnation which have exercised philosophical parapsychologists. Until the instrumental detection of whatever reality lies behind such terms, an adequate religious assessment of psi will remain in dispute. Meanwhile, we would do well to retain - and nourish - a sense of historical perspective; and to consider prayerfully what is meant by the New Testament injunction to test the spirits.

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THE INDEPENDENT UFO NETWORK  
PRESENTS  
A LECTURE BY

DR JACQUES VALLEE, with JENNY RANGLES  
and GEORGE D. FAWCETT (provisonal).

This IUN sponsored event will take place on April 25th, 1992, at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), Renold Building, from 12.00 noon to 5.30 pm. Tickets for this unique event cost only £8.00 per person and are available from: Stuart Smith, 15 Rydal Street, Burnley, Lancashire, BB10 1H3. Please make all cheques/postal orders payable to Stuart Smith.

The lectures will cover the recent works of both Dr Jacques Vallee and Jenny Rangles with George Fawcett (former United States military) offering his own unique overview of UFO research in the USA. As the seating capacity of the lecture theatre is somewhat limited you are advised to purchase your tickets in advance although some tickets may be available on the door.

# Pardon?

by Martin Kottmeyer

Some theories just find themselves forgotten. It's not that they are disproven or even argued against. You hear it bandied about for a few years and then a decade or two later you stumble across it again and realise, "That's odd, I haven't heard that idea in a long time!" That seems to have been the fate of a dandy little notion about UFOs that used to be heard in the Fifties and Sixties. When I heard it again a few months ago it was like triggering a timeslip. It got me to wondering what had happened to it, and my first thought was to dig up Richard Haines's big list of UFO theories in the February 1987 Flying Saucer Review. He cites dozens of notions, many with only one proponent. This theory, despite a modest popularity once upon a time, slipped through the research net. I rummaged through Ron Story's UFO Encyclopedia for a time. Rare notions like planetary poltergeists and underwater civilisations are accorded attention and discussion. This theory is absent. Flip through the past decade of UFO books and one could be forgiven for thinking it had become taboo to mention it. Ray Palmer did, after all, warn that it was a 'brilliant but dangerous' idea. Censorship would however require that the notion be taken seriously, and that is something that never happened. People just forgot it.

I know I just plain forgot it. The memory of it resurfaced when I picked up a video of an adolescent film titled Doin Time on Planet Earth (1989). "Whaddaya-know," I thought, "somebody brought back the old Prison-Earth theory." It used to turn up on talk shows back in the Sixties once in a while. It had a sardonic whimsy to it that was quite winning; conveying just the right note of light-spirited urbane pessimism. It's too wild to be true, but wouldn't it explain a lot if it really was? It's a witty thought. You could almost imagine Mark Twain dreaming it up.

The Prison Earth theory doesn't have the lengthy pedigree of the reconnaissance theory, but it has a respectable lineage traceable within the early literature of ufology. One can find it already in the first saucerzine from 1953, Al Bender's Space Review. Bender called for people to send in their theories on what flying saucers were all about and compiled a list which must be granddad to the Haines list. As part of Theory No.11 Harold F. Emrich of Kansas wrote, "I think the saucers are to keep us imprisoned on Earth until we civilise ourselves to the point where we no longer pose a threat to them."

John McCoy wrote a book with ouija board contactee George Hunt Williamson titled UFOs Confidential (1958). In his part, McCoy elaborated on the hypothesis that Earth is a 'prison world' or a 'great lunatic asylum.' Man has lost awareness of reality and has been given the illusion of freedom. Our desires are controlled by our system of economics and the inculcation of materialistic goals. This enslavement is accomplished by the trick of putting children in physical education classes! Its regimentation and excitation of savage instincts levels delicate and creative genius. This earth is controlled by a great force from the deceptive aliens of Orion.

Donald Keyhoe's Flying Saucers - Top Secret (1960) briefly puts forward the notion of a Captain Brent that aliens are here to keep tabs on a colony that was deliberately abandoned. It was a means of getting rid of undesirables. With Earth acting as a Devil's Island, these exiles would serve as examples for others at home to stay in line. This would serve to explain the human appearance of many UFOnuts, particularly in that period.

Ray Palmer, in the January 1959 issue of Search, relayed the probably facetious contact tale of Art LaVove which appeared once in the Los Angeles Times. The InterGalactic Empire banished rebels who destroyed a base beyond Mars. They were lobotomised and consigned to a life of savagery on Earth. Ever since, the Empire has sent its lobotomised prisoners here on a daily basis. "All of the aberrated of the Cosmos are dispatched here, where they can be watched. To put it bluntly, this planet is an IGE nouthouse." Palmer granted it was likely that this was only a cleverly conceived fiction, but that it nonetheless matched his personal beliefs. He thought LaVove "may have uttered the prize truth of all time."

Jan Hudson in Those Sexy Saucer People (1967) admits arriving independently at a similar theory. Noting UFOs showed up after we set off H-bombs or took off for space travel, she offered this thought, "I think the earth is a giant institution in which the human race has been incarcerated for its own good. And every time we start rattling the bars, the keeps come hurrying down to take a look." Hudson relates that when she offered this idea before a group of contactees, no-one seemed to care much for it. This reaction suggests the theory was already on its way to being forgotten. George Adamski and Orfeo Angelucci, the two most famous of the Utopian contactees, both testified to the truth of the Prison Earth in the middle of the Fifties.

A Saturnian named Kāmu told George Adamski during a conversation in a cafe that Earth had been selected centuries ago as the system to which they would exile their troublemakers. "They were gathered in ships from the many planets and transported to Earth, without equipment or implements of any kind." Here they were

forced to work and draw on their talents to earn their place in the Creator's fold. The extraterrestrials watch and send messiahs from time to time to help out, but man wars against man, and his achievements are lost to his penchant for destruction.

Orfeo Angelucci's astral contacts revealed that vast numbers of Earthlings are former inhabitants of the world of Lucifer which once existed between Mars and Jupiter. Those responsible for the destruction of Lucifer were deep-drowned in Time and Matter to live in the 'underworld of illusion' that makes up the Earth. Flying saucers still visit 'our prison world' to liberate us spiritually.

Flying saucers are not a vital element in the theory. Science fiction periodically adopts the idea. Exiles of the Stratosphere by Frank Belknap Long Jr (Astounding Stories, July 1935) involved an advanced race with lighter-than-air metals dwelling in the upper atmosphere that only sent outcasts to the surface. In A.E. van Vogt's Asylum (1942) the Earth is a sort of Botany Bay or dumping ground for the vicious elements of the galaxy. Most recently, there was a trite, short-lived television series named Hard Time On Planet Earth (1989) based on the premise that an alien warrior had been transformed into a human being and exiled here as punishment for the crime of rebellion. In religion, one can go back to George Berkeley's Alciphron, or, the Minute Philosopher (1732) for the opinion "the Earth is, after all, the prison house in God's Kingdom."

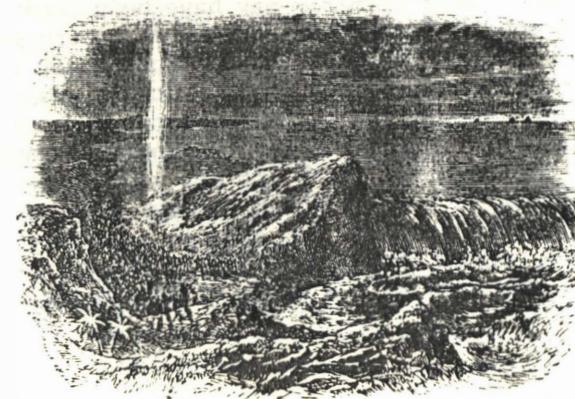
The Prison Earth theory isn't really about the UFO mystery: it's about the problem of suffering. The world should be a good place. Life should be fair. So, why isn't it? Any answer is going to be mythological in character, if not in form. The venerable orthodox choices are original sin and karma. We are cursed by the actions of our ancestors or our forgotten selves. Prison Earth doesn't change this. Adamski blamed ancestors, Angelucci blamed our forgotten selves. It is only a clarification of setting. Prisons are supposed to be cruel, so, hey, no wonder there is so much insanity and suffering in the world.

Whether this notion can get us anywhere in understanding UFOs is a different matter. One could perhaps argue that Whitley Streiber's torments aboard the unkempt vessel of Communion more befits a prisoner than a lab specimen. His crime? Read his works of horror. His fictional victims have ample motive for turning him in. Perhaps the sociable tour of the craft given Patrolman Herb Schirmer can be interpreted as professional courtesy. The incompetent security arrangements on the Travis Walton saucer, however, is impossible to jive with the idea of advanced jailors. The lack of restraints on the table is bad enough, but letting the prisoner escape and enter what

appeared to be the control room is totally laughable. Most cases are simply uninterpretable by this theory. One could try to play up the significance of Adamski and Angelucci corroborating each other, but they don't make ideal witnesses. Short of the Warden coming over and laying down the law, it seems doubtful there will ever be evidence of a sort that would compel acceptance.

None of this explains why the Prison Earth theory faded. I never saw a concerted effort to debunk it. I'd be tempted to suggest that people tired of it, were it not for the way that crashed saucers and impending government revelation rumours seem to keep on running despite being around since 1947. My guess is it is more a matter of emotional ambience. Palmer was right to think the prison-earth theory is dangerous. It explains the absence of contact all too well. Aliens avoid us because we are useless misfits; the scum of the galaxy. If you take that corollary to heart, you are asking for a grand-scale inferiority complex. At least with the present view of earthlings as lab specimens, we are contributing to the saving of a dying world or helping some exobiologist win the alien equivalent of a Nobel prize. If we're lucky we get preserved as a 'precious' species. Back in the Fifties, the world stood no chance of being preserved. It was going to be destroyed one way or another by nuclear weapons. If we've been given the death sentence, what is more appropriate than to indulge in gallows humour. The emotional tone was right for it. When ufology turned more upbeat in the Seventies and began looking for a new relationship to the universe, the Prison Earth theory didn't fit in anymore.

So, let's not get weepy over Prison Earth passing from the scene. It was amusing, but things aren't really that bad. Man is still in chains in some ways, it is true. Most may even live in quiet desparation from time to time. But most also have their moments of joy and periods of contentment. The keys to the door are usually within reach.



# Occultism: A Postmodern Perspective

by Phil Hine

Living as we do, in a society which is rapidly mutating itself by means of computers, camcorders and cable TV; in which men can walk on the Moon, whilst others sell their children to the organ dealers; where the mysteries of life are probed during DNA manipulation, and the realities of other people's death served up on prime-time television, it is easy to wonder, where does 'the occult' fit in? Isn't there enough fear and horror, beauty and wonder on this crazy old world of ours without looking into dark corners and 'dabbling' with the forbidden? In a world where political 'isms' have largely taken over the job of meat-grinding populations from religious 'isms', who needs more of the same? Isn't the occult just a mess of half-baked psychobabble indulged in by those who need to justify their inadequacies, inequality, and intellectual shortcomings?

What is 'the occult' anyway? A quick flip through the dictionary tells us that the term refers to 'secret', 'hidden', or 'the supernatural', none of which helps too much. After all, our society is rotten with secrets: presumably anyone who studies economics or political theory can be classed as studying 'the occult', since the workings of governments and multi-nationals rapidly leads you into areas which are truly 'occult'. But no, that's not how we usually think of the word. 'Occult' conjures up images of robed figures, or better yet, naked figures, cavoring in graveyards and behind closed doors; of wizened old men studying dusty books inside mouldery libraries; teenagers dabbling with ouija boards, and the entire works of Clive Barker.

The subject of the 'occult' covers a vast range of subjects, from Alchemy to Zen, from spiritual speculation about the universe to bending cutlery. What formerly may have been 'hidden' is being increasingly brought into the neon glow of modern society: through books, films, videos, fanzines, conventions - all the extensions of the new mass communications media. Occult symbols abound on record sleeves, company logos, and designer fashion. In short, another commodity. Occultists can no longer pretend that theirs is a specialist interest. It's another subculture, another fashion. Like any fashion, it moves through changes and fads. Like any fashion you can buy into it, and acquire a passing knowledge of its tacit beliefs, values and assumptions. Like any other fashion, it provides its adherents with a sense of community, against other groups.

Occultism as a subject of enquiry is perhaps less interesting than the people whom it attracts. A great many people become involved in the occult not because they wish to explore 'lost' areas of knowledge or have conversations with demons, but because it imparts to them a sense of connection with the past. In a culture where the edges of present time are crumbling into the future at a rate that is often difficult to comprehend, the sense of connection to historical time is vague, to say the least. The contradictions of post-Capitalism have fragmented consensus reality to a point where alienation and powerlessness are endemic in our culture. Occultism offers an alternative: a sense of connection, perhaps, to historical time when the world was less complicated, where individuals were more 'in touch' with their environment, and had more personal control over their lives. Occultism, and the subjects within it, strive to look at basic questions: "Where am I going?", "How will I get there?", "How much fun can I have on the way?" Occultism offers possibilities, that which has not been explained by science: capabilities we may have which go beyond our accepted limitations: powers which we can tap into to change ourselves, and our world. Science does not have the enduring quality that occultism can offer. Science is changing too fast. Most of us are operating on a view of reality set up by Newton (an alchemist, by the way) whilst pure science is already beginning to find out where Einstein went wrong.

Science and the occult are wary bedfellows at the best of times. Most science is based on logic, which assumes universal axioms. This has proved to work very well for building bridges or smashing atoms, but less so when it comes to human beings. Logic is a descriptive tool, no more, and its limitations when applied to human behaviour are slowly becoming apparent. There's parapsychology of course. Probably the most hotly contested area of science this century. And still not much nearer to 'explaining' the effects that it is monitoring. Scientists using the language of science to explain occult phenomena is almost as painful reading as occultists trying to do the same. Appropriating the terms of science is, though, necessary. We've come to expect it, especially in a society where 'science' sells washing powder and other basic necessities. Science gives something the stamp of authenticity in the same way that does religion. It needn't even be 'good' science, so long as it sounds even halfway plausible. Veracity of belief is the key, here. Go back a few centuries and the peasant-in-the-street would tell you that yes, the Gods were real, and that if you kept them happy, they didn't strike you down with a bolt of lightning. Unless you have a strong religious sense, it's difficult to achieve this level of certainty nowadays. Instead, Gods can be thought of as metaphors, archetypes, role models, self-replicating morphogenetic fields, etc, etc. Moreover, you don't need huge colonnades, vast temples, three thousand screaming worshippers and a naked virgin on an altar to get their attention. All you need is a dab of incense, a meditation cushion, and some electrodrone music.

Yet, unaccountably, something wonderful may happen. This, perhaps, is the real place of the occult in modern society. Our world is so crowded with marvels and miracles that they have become commonplace to us; especially when we no longer see ourselves as miracles. We swim through the world, deafened by the buzz of machines and the flicker of the videodrome, our senses dulled from the information overload. Yet, shifting to another position, we suddenly find that the world is magical. That humanity is, as Alan Moore eloquently put it, "unpredictable beyond the dreams of Heisenberg; the clay in which the forces that shape all things leave their fingerprints most clearly."

If it is so simple, why can't it be simply stated? Well, we tend to need a lot of convincing. The keys to change are not enough, we need a cultural backdrop in which to set them - systems of beliefs, maps, explanations that allow us to stretch the credibility envelope to accommodate new ideas and perceptions. So we search for knowledge amongst books, books, and yet more books, when it becomes increasingly plain that the answer is within our grasp. Entering the doorway marked 'occult' we find ourselves within a labyrinth that offers packages to suit most tastes, from potboilers of 'mysterious phenomena' to hardcore books on magick. Most people tend to settle into one particular subject that excites them the most, and participate to varying degrees. The first level of enquiry is, often as not, reading. The second level is practice, usually within the bounds of one or another of the many esoteric systems of knowledge. The third level is that of going beyond the boundaries within the occult - the gaps which are usually unmarketable, unattractive, and above all, personally risky. For me, the occult is a fascinating subject because it draws from the past and attempts to synthesize with the frontiers of science and technology, as well as art, philosophy, and social engineering. Occult practices (hopefully) lead the individual to look within, and also at the individual's social conditioning and adherence to belief structures. At the same time, occult practices can encourage the individual to look at the wider world; what's going on and what, if anything, we can do about it. It's a meeting point in the cultural melting pot, where all avenues of exploration can meet, merge, and produce new syntheses. A node where ideas mutate each other, and the individuals who wield them

In many senses, occultism is an 'escape route' from the limitations of consensus reality. Some escape routes are well-signposted and, despite their surface gloss, mere dead-ends. We search for that which is 'hidden' from us, and may come to discover that magick leads us back to ourselves, and the very basics of how we relate to each other and the world about us. That perhaps the really engrossing mysteries are those by which we live daily, on an unconscious basis - that which we tacitly take for granted. For me,

the potential of occultism is less about becoming 'spiritual', and more about becoming spirited. We live, for the most part, in a dismembered world of things and objects. Magick may lead us to attempt to create a dialectical world of processes - where understanding, rather than explaining, is venerated; where differences are acknowledged, rather than being merely glossed over. The occult may offer the keys to understanding ourselves, but the will to do so must be ours. Else the occult becomes merely another arena in which we continue to act out the same games of power and control - 'being right', 'getting even', being 'an expert', 'being better than so-and-so'. Make no mistake, the occult is permeated with the same word-viruses which permeate the rest of our culture, as is clearly shown in the rapid growth of spiritual consumerism. Popular occultism does not challenge anything. Unpopular occultism challenges consensus reality by enabling us to meet, head-on, our taboos and fears. Not to exorcise or explain them away, but to understand the power of these 'monstrous souls', and in understanding them, allow them to grow. This is a difficult and demanding task, more so because while it is an essential part of occult development, it has been obscured and mythologised as somehow 'sinister'. Our society has locked its collective demons away in a dark cellar. They have responded by rotting the foundations, and occasionally flooding the streets with sewage.

Magick and mysticism are two poles of action within the occult. Magick is the way of action-in-the-world. Hence the phrase Do What Thou Wilt. Magick is about do-ing. Mysticism, however, is more associated with transcending reality, or of achieving zero states of enlightenment. Neither are mutually exclusive, however. But mysticism often requires a spiritual dimension of experience, whilst modern magick is becoming increasingly concerned with the world as we experience it, rather than as we tend to model it. After all, the map is not the territory. We might create temporary isles of order with which to zoom in on one particular part of our experience, but in the real world, so much of our experience is cast against a backdrop of chaotic terrain. We may search for 'evidence' of a grand plan behind the scenes, but what of the possibility that there may not be one. Why do we need to explain the world so completely anyway? The Uncertainty Principle itself assumes the status of a taboo, and to banish it we search for meaning through the shattered remains of past cultures, through a labyrinth of lost gods and hidden knowledge when we know, deep down, that knowledge alone cannot fill the void in our hearts, that wisdom springs from experience and the mindful application of learning and insight. Occultism may give us a link to the past, but it also reminds us that the present is continually changing, and that individuals participate in their own futures. The questions that occultism addresses are changing as society changes, as we dream new possibilities of what we might become.

It is the constant mutation and diversification of contemporary occultism which gives it its postmodern flavour - new magical systems and diversifications are being created all the time. All limitations have been thrown off, and today's magicians are equally likely to be interested in the more novel applications of high technology as they are the more traditional tools of magick. Witness the growth of 'ocular' performance art, which directly draws upon shamanic techniques such as suspension, body piercing and trance states. Artists are returning to shamanistic practices, and it is also worth noting that modern magicians are usually occupied with one or more creative endeavour, be it writing, artwork, music, or multi-media using computers. An important part of the magical process is the 'earthing' of ideas and flashes of illumination into consensus reality, so that they can be transmitted and left for others to use as 'signposts' for their own progression. Modern occultism can thus be characterised as an exercise in collage.

This is an age of magick, where reality can be manipulated, twisted, served up for entertainment and like wise shattered for fun, profit and control. Even our chosen escape routes feed the beast. Cracking open a new novel, freshly smelling of shrink-wrap and clean pages, I settle back and delve into a larger-than-lifenarrative outlined in clear, crisp serifs and quickfire bursts of prose. Walking down a street at sunset, striding with a sense of purpose, shades angled for maximum coverage. From a window, a heavy bass line growls into gear followed by sawtooth guitars. The sounds, the street, sundown and shades form a composite scene; and I realise - I'm in a movie. Like many modern films it has good sets, wild special effects, but the script leaves something to be desired.

Desire. All aspirations and desires have been carefully packaged and subsumed into the structure of commodities. Even the most intrepid psychonaut must eventually, it seems, move into the marketplace. Pre-packaged realities eye each other, juggling for position. You only have so much time to devote to any one style. So which is it to be? The only stable principle is pleasure - from whatever you draw your kicks, no matter your justifications, noble or otherwise. We tend to go for the simplest solutions - beliefs in a bag, stereotypes, ideals in bite-size, take home portions. Fast-dumped into our minds, hard-wired in through social conditioning and everyday/extraday experience, they form the bedrock on which we build the shining cities of self, dream, and ideal. The whiter the city, the deeper, more convoluted the sewers that support it.

We are not encouraged to go for 'the big picture', except through the accepted routes of isms and ists, whereby the imagination is fed through logic gates, carefully screened, directed, curtailed and manicured. Going for 'the big picture' conjures up images of

psychic panic . . . paranoia or other forms of socialised madness where our none-too-stable coping strategies fail under the information overload. If you want to glimpse the big picture, then you'd better wear shades, or better still blinkers. Reality is at fault: please do not adjust your mind.

We are all engaged in the evolution of the beast, at once both passive and active. Passive in that we can observe what happens to ourselves, and active in that we do participate at many levels, in the continual reflection and intensification of symbols and images that are all around us: in our heads, and lurking in every square meter of territory to assault and engage our senses. Reality becomes a sea of dreams on which any individual or group can form islands built of images, symbols, clusters of belief and viral ideas. This is the realm of the magicians, who are able to adroitly manipulate images without any apparent effort. Some may be highly visible as celebrities, media darlings, walking, talking ciphers for the projection and intensification of charismatic power. The most successful are the adepts of the invisible. Not so much hidden masters from Tibet as those who can gosub direct to the Deep Mind - those who can pull strings without us being aware of the fact. Puppeteers in the inner theatre of the mind. Slipping in a word here, a phrase there. A blip across our screen. And they're gone

Art imitates life. In the inner theatre, it pays off not to be stage centre, in full view of the lights. No, to be on the periphery is better, or best yet, to be part of the scenery. Here, the most deadly predators are the ones that we (as audience) have grown used to. If a thing becomes 'known', it is often dismissed as harmless, irrelevant, or we become 'wise' to its games. Alas, appearances can be deceptive.

Sitting in a smoke-limned pub, against a background buzz of deals, assignations and remixed dub, I focus in on a packet of John Player Specials. Black and gold project the image - corporate desire sigilised. A black formula one racing car curves a graceful arc around an s-bend in my brain. Gold is quality. Black evokes associations at once simple, elegant and hi-tech. Like some billionaire's coffin the packet commands the visual field. An everyday object, yet loaded with images, associations, memories. An icon of the hypereal. Continually mutating, looping time and image back on itself as fashions are revived, reach a sudden peak and are cast into the strata of subcultures. Reality becoming a virtual field, constantly recycled through walkmans, videos, computer images, television and playbacks.

A while back I had my first taste of a computer-generated skin-flic. A series of digitised images looped together. A couple copulating. You could slow them down or speed them up, reverse the thrusts and jerks. A frozen slice of fornication, forever

doomed to never coming. Suddenly our replication systems have a new dimension to them, faster than we can evolve a framework into which to fit them. Whilst the effects of visual images are only just being charted, the digital revolution is on us. Lila, illusion, spins her net and we are enmeshed in images under other images, dancing to songs hidden in other songs, and lulled to sleep by false promises lurking within other messages. As hackers of the hyperreal we have to lever images apart, disentangling the webs, charting the temporary tunnels, climbing invisible mountains, and slipping between the cracks in the solid foundations of the world which wraps around us. Such is the role of the occultist in postmodern culture.

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Replying to Phil Hine's article in TWP 3, Stan Andrews sends us MAGICK - THE OTHER INGREDIENT

Phil Hine, in his article 'Belief - A Key to Magic' points out how essential self-belief is in the attainment of a response to ritual, irrespective of the form a ritual takes, traditional or self-programmed.

However, may I suggest that there is another ingredient that is needed to ensure (not always, I hasten to add, for magick is a very empirical pursuit) at least some probability of success, viz the 'situation programme'.

If one desires to become a champion swimmer for example, all the rituals ever will be of no avail if there is no water in the pool. Likewise, magick to attract wealth can only have a chance to succeed if the ground is laid beforehand - Doing the Pools, Gambling, Investing etc. There has to be a 'chance' aspect to bolster the belief that one can make it happen.

To attract the girl of one's dreams one needs to have such a one in one's sights, possibly where she resides, her habits, her approachability. Anything practical to aid belief in the chosen ritual.

I believe that many a would-be Magus gives up the art after long and arduous headbanging on the ritual altar because they imagine, and possibly seriously believe, that their desires will materialise out of thin air.

The true magician is a conniver of situations. With a careful appraisal of known facts before embarking upon impossible expectations the large failure rate among potential magi could be avoided.

Every pentacle should have inscribed upon it "You cannot make a pudding without ingredients".

## End Times Bulletin

In the course of my work today - in the Department of Social Security - I was interviewing a lady who had been sent to live in Newquay by Mary, the mother of Jesus. She had given up her job and home in the North of England, and travelled down to Cornwall to stay in a bedsit she cannot afford, to perform a mission of which she has no inkling at all. She has been preparing for this moment for a year, and I had no idea what to say to her about it. She is, I think, in her own End Time. An inevitable moment has arrived for her, and she is locked firmly within it.

The concept of a personal End Time is, I think, an important one. In a time of pressure, or crisis, or desperation, it may be a means by which an individual can take a form of control over his or her own life. It appears to be a last resort, but one more positive and optimistic than suicide. A method of ending a way of life, without ending the life itself.

I guess that clearing away the past is a dream that many of us have from time to time, and there is a strong drive towards it. That sort of drive can warrant powerful psychological manoeuvres, often involving communications and events supposedly external to the individual. Such a clearing away seems to be associated with the key experiences of traditional Western religion - confession and conversion. I can also see links with the social martyrdom implicit in Islamic Fundamentalism.

It is also reflected in our own areas of interest. Many of us will know someone who has suddenly dropped out of active involvement in, say, Spiritualism or UFO research, and will have nothing more to do with it. I think this is particularly true of subjects that offer so little positive proof in return for such great effort, and the need for respite and change can be a great temptation. Many chances are taken on the basis of that need, my Marian refugee of this afternoon certainly not being the most extreme. During our research and investigation, we could well bear the possible effects of a personal End Time in mind.

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### WANTED

Names and addresses of active UFO groups and/or UFO publications. I am in the process of trying to compile a comprehensive directory of all UFO groups from around the world. No group is too small or too large. I would also like to include UFO publications, from news stand magazines to the more simpler form of newsletters. If you are involved in any such activities please send as much detail as you can to:

Philip Mantle, 1 Woodhall Drive, Batley, West Yorkshire, England, WF17 7SV.

## Small Items of Value

A new home for shorter articles and commentaries; with a couple of £5 book tokens on offer. Here's our two winners for this issue . . .

From Mrs E. Succamore

I always believed in survival of the spirit. When I was not quite 4 years old my Father passed on. On the day he was buried my little sister, 20 months old, passed on too. I was quite sure they had gone to Heaven.

My Mother had 7 other children to bring up including me. We were brought up in an orthodox religion. When I was 17, just as the war ended my Mother died. I was devastated by her death and totally rejected a God who could be so unfeeling as to let my Mother suffer so cruelly before she eventually died.

I married at 23 and had 4 children. And like other hypocrites who profess not to believe in God called upon him in moments of extreme crisis. As the children got older I went out to work and after we moved here (Wickford, Essex) I gave up my job. My husband was working away from home so I was alone most evenings, and I became curious as to whether my Mother was happy in the other world (my rejection of God did not include rejection of the other world).

So I decided to try automatic writing, and it worked: I made contact almost immediately (and I would here warn others not to try it: it is a very dangerous pursuit). After writing for some time I found I could hear their voices, and it was no longer necessary to write. I thought a question, and they gave me the answer, but things became nasty; the voices would not stop, they talked all day and all night.

Obviously, I thought I was going mad. So that people wouldn't realise I was mad I was very particular about keeping the house clean and tidy, because everybody knows that mad people do not.

The voices knew all about my life and made a point of discussing my sins. They criticised everything I did and tried to direct all my actions. They jeered at me constantly and persisted in going backwards and forwards through my life.

I gradually learned to live with it. I had been an audio-typist, and was used to listening to voices without answering them. Slowly the voices faded away, until there was only one or two. They stayed quiet at night so I could sleep. I started to attend Spiritualist churches to try and find some answers, and met many sane people who also heard voices.

Then my eldest daughter's marriage broke up, and I had to look after my little grand-daughter. I also went for healing to a clergyman who has since passed on. He told me there was no evil around me, and that eased my mind.

One day sitting in the lounge with my grand-daughter I heard a woman's voice say, "come away, Jack, that is how it all started before" and my grand-daughter said, "don't let her push you around Jack, hit her."

Another time, I was singing my grand-daughter to sleep with a song I sang to my father before he passed on, and she said, "Why is that man standing at the bottom of my cot and crying?" Whilst I may have had doubts when the experience was only my own, my grand-daughter confirmed that there were people there that I could only hear, but that she could see and hear.

I have had many experiences and know without any doubt that life is continuous. Incidentally, my belief in God came back, and has never wavered since. I am now a Healer and I thank God for the experience I went through as it has enabled me to help many others who have suffered in the same way. There are many people diagnosed as schizophrenic who are really clairvoyant and clairaudient, and with the right audience could become mediums.

I have had a great deal of proof through mediums that our loved ones survive on another plane, and wish to help us as a big brother or sister in a higher class in school would. We only have to listen.

In the realm of the supernatural I am a sceptic. Although I acknowledge that there are phenomena that appear to be outside the known natural laws, I can only accept them as aberrations or spontaneous displacements of the accepted norm. It is difficult to experiment with happenings that occur suddenly and are not repeatable in a laboratory setting. A ghost does not obligingly crawl into a test-tube.

I confess I am now an armchair investigator into things paranormal. I have to rely on published accounts of phenomena which, if not downright leg-pulls, are often secondhand edited reports. In the past I have attended Spiritualist meetings and seances, religious ceremonies, cults and on one occasion a farcical black magic ceremony. So why have I become a sceptic when some of these experiences have been impressive and conducted with dignity and sincerity?

It is all due to my 'Inner Guide', viz. INTUITION. I first became aware of this valuable aid to problem solving and decision making over fifty years ago when I was in my mid-twenties. As a participant in the activities of a Baptist Church I was singled out as a future Baptist Minister. A sponsored place was assured in the Regents Park Baptist Seminary. The first step, however, was that I should commit myself to baptism by total immersion. The opportunity to procure an education and a permanent vocation was exciting, and I was ready to grasp it with both hands with the support of a host of wellwishers.

Then, with a suddenness that shook me, something within me 'said' "Caution, you are committing yourself for the rest of your life. Reject the offer." This intense inner voice was my first experience of that nature. I describe it as a voice, but in the metaphorical sense. It was not clairaudience. It evolved as an idea of great intensity. I realised later that I was posing the questions and possible answers, and this inner guide, like a computer, was analysing all the possibilities and coming up with the most logical solution. Not only did I decline the offer, I also left the church completely. From then on I have 'listened' to that inner guide when making decisions or solving problems. I have nurtured this intuition over the years. It is now second nature. It is fallible only when I over-ride it, to do what I want and not what a careful analysis would direct otherwise.

So why am I a sceptic? I have considered many religions, philosophies and cults over the years. To my questions, should I or should I not commit myself to any specific teachings, my intuition has always come down heavily on the negative side. I feel a great confidence and mental satisfaction in following my intuition. I have used this intuitive deductive process on the subject of Life After Death. Perhaps, with the Editor's permission (granted, with thanks! Ed.) readers may care to consider the results.

## Future Plans . . .

Again, this issue has taken far longer to produce than I'd planned - sorry for the delay. It's ended up with 40 pages because so much good material arrived after I wrote cut to all our subscribers. I'll try to maintain this size in future.

I've been able to afford the extra pages - and postage - by printing this issue myself. It's a lengthy business, but it does keep the costs down. Putting this issue together I've tried to reflect the very broad interests of our readers that I glean from what you write about. I hope that even more of you will want to contribute in future, particularly to the new Small Items of Value feature.

TWP 5 should be out at the end of June. New material is already coming in, and there are more unusual and original columns and features on the way. News from the Front will be bigger and better yet, and I plan to build closer relationships with some excellent publications outside the U.K. to bring you material you won't find elsewhere.

If your subscription has expired, do please renew. If you have any suggestions for improving Wild Places, I'll be delighted to consider them!

## Looking for the Aliens by Peter Hough

Jenny Randles and I recently finished work on a new book. We have for years been active investigators, dealing with cases where people have allegedly been contacted, and even 'abducted' by 'aliens'. Actually, the percipients of these bizarre experiences almost never claim the phenomenon is extraterrestrial. That is usually the interpretation of ufologists with a less than objective outlook.

Over the last few years we have worked with psychologists and psychiatrists in an effort to determine whether these cases have any factual basis at all. This has been very difficult to determine one way or another. One of the 'problems' is that the majority of our UFO abductees are not the cranks and hoaxers that the professional sceptics would have everyone believe. Abductees come from all walks of life: housewives, police officers, company executives and university professors, for instance. They lead perfectly normal, rational lives, except for the incidence of capture and examination by 'aliens'.

Many mental health experts have never come across anything like it before in normal psychiatry. Yet it seems to have a psychological basis - and a 'reality' basis. At least one clinical psychologist believed that an abductee was describing a literal experience under hypnosis. Perhaps it is an objective phenomenon which effects percipients in a subjective way.

We have thought for years how much like a bad science fiction plot the UFO experience is. It lacks sophistication, and its futuristic trappings are no more advanced than the latest Star Trek episode. In other words, it is not what it portrays itself to be, but how we might expect it to be.

The experience is composed of a definitive number of components; a feeling that something is going to 'happen', an impulse to go somewhere, the appearance of a distant light or object, a sensation of isolation from all natural sounds and human activity, the awareness of a 'craft', appearance of entities, abduction into a white room, restraint on a table, examination, conducted tour, ecological warnings and the giving of personal information regarding the abductee's own future.

Usually they remember the UFO sighting but not the abduction, though they are aware that a couple of hours cannot be accounted for. The abduction memory usually manifests in nightmares, a possible short cut being the use of hypnotic regression. The thing that detracts from the conclusion that the experience is purely psychological is

that the abduction is often shared with other individuals. Sometimes there are ground traces, and in one case a photograph - though these latter elements turn out to be ambiguous at best.

At the risk of going over old ground, it is patently obvious that aliens have been around for centuries, in other guises. There are just too many similarities to conclude otherwise. Not only that, but the aliens manifest today in other phenomena. There are parallels with Near Death Experiences, and as I argue in my book, Witchcraft - A Strange Conflict, strong elements of similarity in Satanic abuse abduction cases.

Our studies of the UFO abduction phenomenon have made us wonder if the arguments as to whether they are 'actual' or 'fantasy generated' have become invalid. In some indefinable way, we need the aliens, they are a part of us, a curious symbiosis reflected in our art, literature, wishes and nightmares. The concept of 'aliens' is a living germ, an idea, which resides in all of us.

We decided to look at the various routes the aliens have taken through the fabric of human society. Instead of writing a book about aliens in science fiction and horror, one on UFOs and another on NASA's Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence programme - SETI - recently voted 100 million dollars for research over the next decade, we decided to bring all of these elements together and see what happened . . .

We searched far and wide to discover how different people dealt with the Alien Concept, the mechanics of contacting extraterrestrials, and the consequences. We interviewed Bob Shaw, Ramsey Campbell, David Langford, John Grant and Arthur C. Clarke on the fiction front, and discussed how aliens have been portrayed in film. Physicists, Professor Paul Davies and Professor Sir Francis Graham-Smith - who is head of the Jodrell Bank radio telescope science centre - gave us their thoughts, and the SETI Institute in California have been very generous in providing us with material. We have looked at the UFO subject, in view of the curious statements coming from retired military personnel in the USA regarding alleged incidents of UFO retrievals. The Ancient Astronaut theory gets a fresh airing.

The book is in five sections: The Dream, The Belief, The Search, The Evidence? and The Consequences. At times we wondered why we bothered. Some chapters wanted to leap over the rail guard into the next section, and vice versa. What is a dream to one person might be reality to another; what one person might cite as evidence, another might sweep aside . . . subjective, my dear Watson.

The position is that whether aliens are really here or not, we still need them. Alien contact stories are one of the main strands of science fiction. Bob Shaw told us why: -

"I think if anyone has any imagination at all, and has looked up into the night sky and seen the stars, they have wondered if there are any planets circling round them. The next step is to ask, does anyone live out there? Is there any intelligent life? What form would it take? A world able to sustain life wouldn't be all that different from our own - but its inhabitants could be totally different."

But Bob feels that science fiction writers on the whole fail to realise that sense of wonder generated by our ground based glimpse into the universe,

"In spite of SF writers' best efforts, the most determined efforts, aliens usually turn out to be humans dressed up as something else. Physically different, but with mental processes that are the same."

Bob hit the nail on the head. That is exactly one of the dilemmas with the UFO field. A really objective alien intelligence would be unrecognisable.

Ramsey Campbell sees the aliens in horror as a metaphor for something else - especially as they manifest in the works of H.P. Lovecraft.

"There is a sense in which the Lovecraft Mythos conveys, in a metaphor, those huge forces Out There which are not malevolent, but completely indifferent to human activity. Maybe occasionally they would seep into human activity, and we would be the worse off for it!"

This 'indifference' of the 'aliens' has been a hallmark of most UFO abduction cases. Indifference is more culturally damaging than plain old aggression and enslavement. It means that human beings are not very important at all, contrary to our own conceitedness!

Ramsey thinks that the alien question is driving us to scramble about frantically in the dark - trying to make sense of things which in some instinctive way we know are there.

"Is ufology a search for the larger-than-can-be-perceived-than-can-be-stated?"

Physicist, Professor Paul Davies, told us: -

"These stories and reports are awfully intriguing. I would say right away that I am not inclined just to dismiss it all as lies or hoaxes. Nor am I inclined to accept it as face value as evidence for extraterrestrial intelligence. I suspect that this field is more likely to be explained as some bizarre psychological experience. I regard most of the people who claim such experiences as very sincere. I suspect there may be no real difference between those who claim they were snatched on their way home from work by an ETI, and Paul on the road to Damascus."

These comments illustrate how deep seated the alien concept is, lying in ambush in those dark chambers of the psyche. Carl Jung suspected as much way back in 1959, when his Flying Saucers - A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Sky was first published. But even Jung admitted confusion over those cases where his 'UFO archetypes' were tracked on radar.

The search for the aliens is a very complex affair. To begin with, we do not know whether we are searching for phantoms generated by the human mind, real 'flesh and blood' extraterrestrials of which SETI scientists are seeking proof or, some strange unfathomable hybrid of the two.

We cannot even be sure that time will tell.

Looking for the Aliens by Peter Hough and Jenny Randles, published by Blandford in softback at £8.95 and hardback, on 19 March 1992.

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## BVM

The Catholic publication, *The Tablet* (29.2.92) reports some Visions of the Virgin Mary that I had not heard of previously. They have been occurring in various parts of Africa.

In Southern Rwanda, a number of pupils at a Catholic boarding school began seeing visions in 1981. Most of the visions ceased within the year but one girl continued to experience them for eight years. Huge crowds gathered on prearranged days, to see the visionary, on an elevated platform, go into trance and speak to an invisible companion. "On some occasions, several thousands claimed to witness strange natural occurrences like the horizontal division of the sun, or the "dancing" of the stars."

In southern Uganda, a girl began seeing visions in November 1987. Crowds of 40,000 pilgrims came to see her speaking to her invisible companion, and to relay messages. "Again, many claimed to witness cosmic signs involving the sun, moon and stars."

Numerous other visions and visionaries are reported, and there is an intriguing cross-cultural element with Muslim children also, apparently, sharing the visionary experiences. AIDS has, not surprisingly, been an important element of the claims of healing always concomitant with such visions. At the site of one vision, the civil authorities had to prevent people eating the local earth, mixed with water, in the belief that all sicknesses could thus be cured.

It seems that Mary is still asking for increased devotion, fasting, and the renunciation and destruction by burning of African charms or 'items of witchcraft'. In the world of Marian visions, little seems to have changed since 1858.