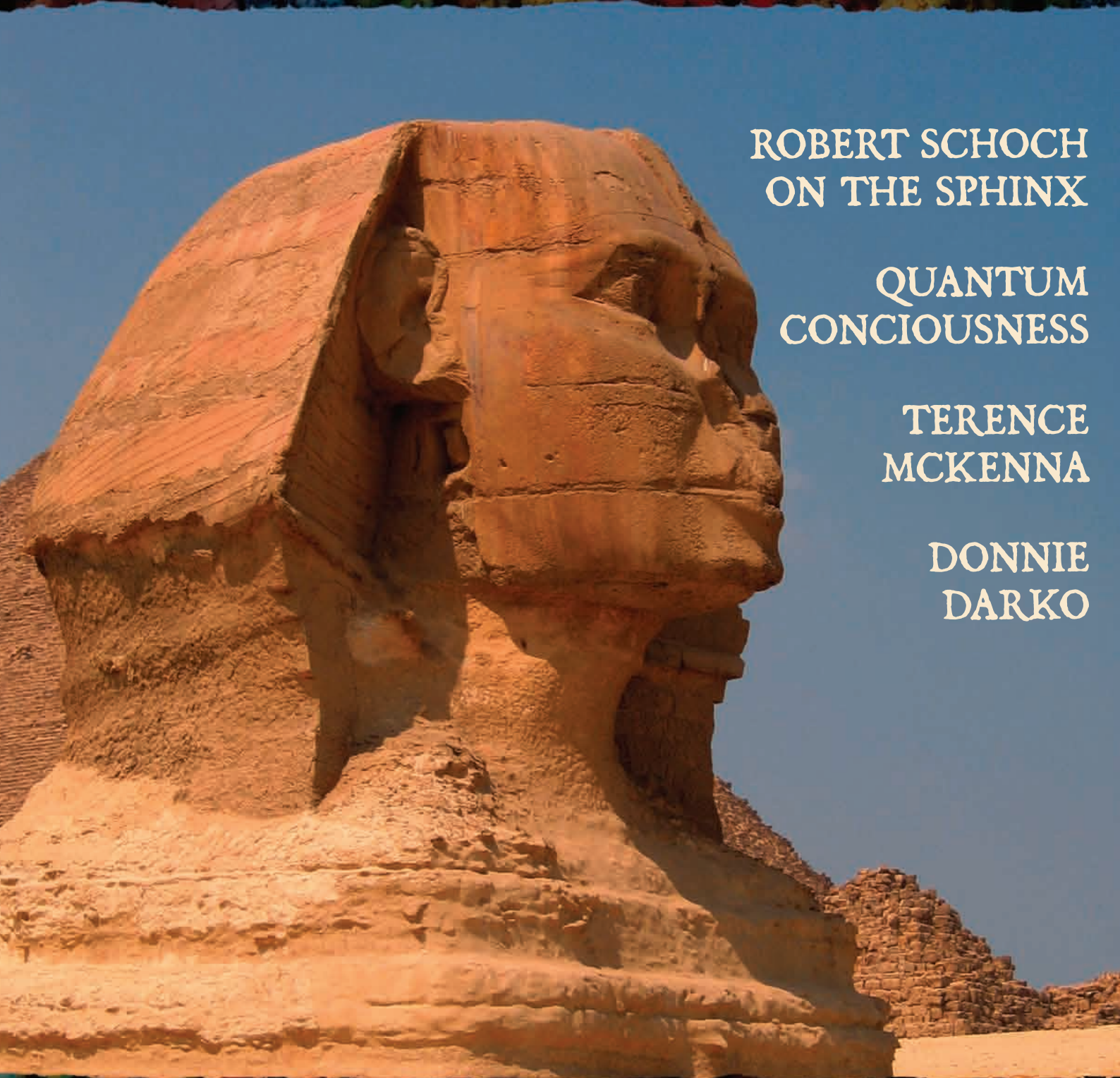


The Daily Grail *Presents*

SUB ROSA

Where Science And Magic, Myth And History Meet



ROBERT SCHOCH
ON THE SPHINX

QUANTUM
CONCIOUSNESS

TERENCE
MCKENNA

DONNIE
DARKO

Issue One - June 2005

Contents

Editorial 1

News 2



Columns:

Greg Taylor 6

Ian Lawton 8

Michael Grosso 10

Cover Story: 14
Schoch To The System



Profler: 22

The Hyper-Dimensional
Ambassador: Terence
McKenna
by Philip Coppens



Feature: 30

The Quantum Mind Of
Stuart Hameroff



Reviews 40

Ars Gratia Artis 48

June 2005

Hello, and welcome to the first issue of *Sub Rosa* magazine. I hope you get as much enjoyment from reading the magazine as we did in putting it together. Please feel free to contact us with your thoughts about our new baby. And it is a baby – each issue we intend to add more content and new features to this newborn. I hope you stay with us as we watch it grow.

Why the name, I hear you ask? Well firstly, because it just popped into my head without any logical analysis, and I always tend to trust my intuitive side (on the odd occasions when it graces me with its presence). Secondly, I find it very apt: the name originates in the Roman myth of Cupid giving a rose to Harpocrates (the baby Horus) as thanks for his ability to keep a secret. The Romans decorated the ceilings of banquet rooms with roses to remind guests that what was spoken within was ‘sub rosa’ (under the rose) – that is, in confidence.

Certainly, the magazine is not about secrecy – I hope it finds its way into the hands of as many enquiring individuals as is possible. But throughout the ages, it has been necessary to talk about our subject matter – hidden history, esoteric traditions, and new paradigm science – in hushed tones, due to the extreme personal danger that came with such heretical views. And while these days we may not be burned at the stake, there is still much opposition from both organised religion and orthodox science. So in the spirit of the past we meet here, within the pages of this magazine, ‘sub rosa’.

Also, with our dislike of following the well-beaten path, we are trying new things with *Sub Rosa*. If you have a constant Internet connection, you’ll find you can click on links within this PDF and be taken to that page in your web browser. If you are interested in any of the books, CDs or DVDs we mention then simply click on its image and you will be taken to the relevant page at Amazon. Also, for those with broadband connections, you can click on movie or audio icons where applicable to access that content (for example, click on the “What the Bleep DVD” icon to view the trailer).

The design of the magazine is by the

abundantly talented Mark James Foster, of Artifice Design. I’m your host, Greg Taylor. And each issue we’ll have contributions from some of the leading lights of the ‘alternative’ scene – this issue you’ll find columns by Ian Lawton and Michael Grosso, and a great piece by Philip Coppens on the legendary Terence McKenna.

Needless to say, it takes quite a bit of work to put together a magazine like this, so we look forward to working with any sponsors who might wish to be a part of the project. We will soon be releasing a rate card for advertising within the magazine – please contact us if interested. I believe that we’ve got the beginnings of something great here – fascinating content, beautiful design, and best of all it’s free. Read on, and feel free to send us your feedback!

Editor: Greg Taylor
Art Director: Mark James Foster
Columnist: Michael Grosso
Columnist: Ian Lawton
Writer: Philip Coppens

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'X-ray' Girl Causes Controversy

Nobel Prize Winner Disputes CSICOP Testing Procedure

Scientific testing has failed to settle the debate over the claims of a Russian girl who claims to be able to see inside the human body. Natalia Demkina – known as the 'Girl with X-ray eyes' – says that she can also spot internal injuries just by looking at a photograph.

Tests in London and New York led to mixed conclusions. British scientists found evidence to support the girl's claims, but a test by the Discovery Channel in the US found that she could not satisfy the conditions set to indicate a successful trial. Demkina correctly picked four out of seven medical conditions, which was marked as a failure by the investigating team. However, Nobel Prize winner Brian Josephson criticised the American tests, saying the criteria for a successful trial was not based on scientific principles.

"The initial decision to consider a score of 4 hits out of 7 as 'failure' when the probability of getting such a score is less than two per cent (i.e. odds of 50 to 1 against) is hardly in step with normal scientific practice," Dr Josephson said in a report on his website. He also questioned the motives of the investigating team, as they were led by well-known skeptics Paul Wiseman and Ray Hyman, who are both affiliated with the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP).

"Wiseman, when questioned about this, appeared to know about the 50 to 1 statistic, but would not accept that the cutoff point had been set wrongly," said Dr Josephson. "He admits that the result is 'interesting', but is then quoted as saying: 'At best, she's done this a lot and she has a real expertise at being able to look at people and make reasonably accurate diagnoses.' Perhaps realising that this statement might not quite convince, he goes on



Photograph © 2004 Andrew Skolnick

to suggest that perhaps Natasha cheated, a handy way to evade the issue."

Dr Josephson made his feelings clear: "Manipulation of concepts such as 'failure', and the abuse of statistics, are commonplace in the world of propaganda. Is that what is happening here, or honest science?" More recent tests have supported Dr Josephson's claims, with researchers at Tokyo University finding that Demkina does seem to have some paranormal ability – although they dispute the idea that she has 'X-ray eyes'.

The latest experiments were carried out by Professor Yoshio Machi at Tokyo University, who specialises in studying anomalous human abilities. "We did a whole range of tests, and the strangest thing was that we found she could also use her abilities on photographs, even on tiny passport photos," Dr Machi said.

"She was able to look at them and apparently see what the problem was. Her ability is not X-ray vision, but she definitely has some kind of talent that we can't explain yet."

(Source: www.ananova.com and www.tcm.phy.cam.ac.uk/)

Figures Predate Nazca Lines

Geoglyphs found to be centuries older than Nazca figures

A South American archaeologist has claimed that a group of about 50 drawings of giant figures, recently discovered in the hills of Peru's southern coastal desert near the city of Palpa, predate the nearby Nazca Lines by four centuries. Johnny Isla said the geoglyphs appear to have been created between 500 and 400BCE, while the more famous Nazca Lines have been dated to a time after 50 BCE.

The figures vary in size from 10 metres to more than 50m across, and are composed of images of humans, monkeys, birds and cats. "These new figures are definitely different and older than those of

the Nazca culture," said Mr Isla, who went on to note the differences between them.

"First, the Paracas figures were drawn on the slopes of the hills, while the Nazca images were drawn in level areas," he said. "Second, the Paracas figures are smaller and were made in a naturalistic style, while the Nazca figures are bigger and stylised. Third, the Paracas figures are mostly arranged in groups, while the Nazca figures are arranged individually. Finally, it is important to note that not one of the Paracas figures were repeated in the Nazca iconography."

(Source: www.theepochtimes.com)

Immortal by 2050?

Futurist believes we're close to the 'Matrix'

Britain's leading futurist predicts that by the year 2050 humans will be able to download their mind into a machine, rendering them virtually immortal. However Ian Pearson, head of the futurology unit at British Telecom, says that it will take a further three decades for lower-class individuals to be able to afford it.

"If you draw the timelines, realistically by 2050 we would expect to be able to download your mind into a machine, so when you die it's not a major career problem," said Pearson. "If you're rich enough then by 2050 it's feasible. If you're poor you'll probably have to wait until 2075 or 2080 when it's routine. We are very serious about it. That's how

fast this technology is moving: 45 years is a hell of a long time in IT."

Pearson, a graduate in applied mathematics and theoretical physics, has spent the past 20 years working in optical networks, broadband network evolution and cybernetics in BT's laboratories. He believes that within 15 years we will begin moving into a 'Matrix'-like environment. "We will spend a lot of time in virtual space, using high quality, 3D, immersive, computer generated environments to socialise and do business in...it's impossible to believe that won't be the normal way of communicating.

(Source: www.observer.guardian.co.uk/)

News Briefs

A series of studies has shown that pessimists are more at risk of catching the common cold, suffering heart disease and even premature death than optimists.

German scientists have suggested that surges of solar activity may cause whales to beach themselves, possibly by disrupting their internal compasses.

Climate change researchers have detected the first signs of a slowdown in the Gulf Stream — the mighty ocean current that keeps Britain and Europe from freezing.

A doctor has claimed that single malt whisky can beat the threat of cancer, thanks to high levels of a powerful antioxidant that kills cancer cells.

NASA scientists believe the Voyager 1 probe is getting very close to the edge of the Solar System – launched in 1977, the craft is now some 14 billion km from the Sun.

Modern technology has been utilised to unveil erased writing on an ancient manuscript which had held treatises of the Greek mathematician Archimedes.

Meditation Beats Death

Quiet Your Mind And Live Longer

One of the first long-term studies of Transcendental Meditation has concluded with surprising results. Researchers found that the practice of meditation was associated with significantly lower rates of death.

"This is the first to show that in a rigorous, long-term study," said Robert Schneider, director of the Center of Natural Medicine and Prevention at the Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa. The results were published in the American Journal of Cardiology. However, other researchers not associated with the study have cautioned against accepting the results at

face value, and recommend larger studies to confirm or deny the positive results.

"Intuitively it makes sense that relaxation may have a benefit on cardiovascular disease mortality," said Theodore Kotchen, who is also currently conducting trials on the effects of Transcendental Meditation. Kotchen, a professor of medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin, added: "It is provocative and very encouraging...(but) it certainly is not a definitive study."

Transcendental Meditation, patented by Beatles guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, is one of several meditation techniques.

(Source: www.jsonline.com)

Wormholes Unusable

A new scientific paper has thrown doubt over the possibility of using 'wormholes' as a method of traversing space and time. Stephen Hsu and Roman Buniy, of the University of Oregon, say that the hypothetical creation and use of a wormhole would require that it be both stable and predictable. However, Hsu and Buniy say that in the case of wormholes, each are mutually exclusive – you can either have stability, or predictability, but not both.

"We aren't saying you can't build a wormhole," said Dr Hsu. "But the ones you would like to build – the predictable ones where you can say Mr Spock will land in New York at 2pm on this day – those look like they will fall apart." However, other physicists

say there could be problems with the paper's conclusions. One researcher argued that the underlying physics of wormholes is not in doubt – the real challenge is how to engineer wormholes big enough to be of practical use.

Albert Einstein and Nathan Rosen were the first scientists to publish a paper on wormholes, in 1935. Hence, wormholes are also often referred to in scientific circles as Einstein-Rosen bridges. Michio Kaku has explained the wormhole concept by the analogy that the shortest distance between two points on a sheet of paper is not in fact a straight line – it is when the points are brought together by folding the paper on top of itself.

(Source: www.news.bbc.co.uk)

News Briefs

London detectives have officially concluded that Italian banker Roberto Calvi – known as "God's Banker", for his close ties with the Vatican Bank – did not take his own life and was in fact murdered in 1982.

Archaeologists have uncovered a gravesite at Peru's ancient ruins of Pachacamac, which includes mummy bundles containing whole families.

The Boxing Day Sumatran earthquake, measuring 9.3 on the Richter Scale, "unzipped" an 800-mile stretch of the planet and released twice the energy first thought, according to a series of studies.

Scientists in the UK have succeeded in levitating some of the heaviest elements in nature, such as lead and platinum, by using liquid oxygen and a strong magnetic field.

New computer simulations have credited Jupiter and Saturn as playing a major role in the formation of the Solar System.

New rules for British television forbid broadcasters from showing purported paranormal events before 9pm.

Runestone Returns

Researcher claims inscription is a code

A geologist and an engineer have claimed that the true message of the Kensington Runestone may be concealed by a secret code. The piece of rock, found more than a century ago, is considered by some as evidence that Norwegians beat Columbus to the Americas.

It was found by farmer Olaf Ohman, and bears an inscription that places Norwegians in Minnesota in 1362. Carved in runes, the message reads: "Eight Goths and 22 Norwegians on an exploration journey...10 men red with blood and dead...14 days journey from this island...year 1362."

Orthodox historians claim that Ohman authored the inscription himself, and say that the language on the rune stone is too modern and some of the runes are made up. However, geologist Scott Wolter says that tests prove the stone had been carved well before Ohman found it. "If this is a hoax, he

lied to his two sons, he lied to his family, lied to his neighbors and friends and lied to the world."

Wolter says that he also found one of the so-called invented runes in a medieval text, refuting the expert's view. Beyond those findings though, some of the anomalous runes may hold a bigger secret. Wolter and Texas engineer Dick Nielsen believe that two crossed runes may be a pointer to a concealed code. "Maybe they're saying, 'Pay attention to me,'" Wolter said.

Wolter and Nielsen surmise that the runestone may have been left by Templars, and that the true message may be related to the enigmatic group of knights. "I'm sure a lot of people are going to roll their eyes and say, 'Oh, it's 'The DaVinci Code,' and if they do, they do," said Wolter. "This is the evidence, this is who was there, this is what the grave slabs tell us. It is what it is."

(Source: www.wcco.com)

Acupuncture Support

Ancient technique found to be 'more than a placebo'

Scientists in the UK say they have found proof that acupuncture works, and successful results are not due to the placebo effect.

Researchers at University College London and Southampton University used brain scans and experiments to separate the placebo effect from any actual positive results. They employed positron emission tomography (PET) scans to monitor the brains of patients

undergoing acupuncture treatment for arthritis pain.

Sarah Williams of the British Acupuncture Council said: "This is very positive news for acupuncture and this latest research is an exciting illustration of what acupuncturists have known for a long time – that acupuncture works and its effectiveness goes beyond the placebo effect."

(Source: www.news.bbc.co.uk)

News Briefs

A British Museum official has suggested that half of the 40 iconic items looted from the Iraq National Museum still had not been retrieved, and 8,000 pieces are missing from its storerooms.

New tests on the 5,300-year-old mummy of "Ötzi the Iceman" have shown suspicious grey spots, which could be the beginnings of decomposition.

Genuine time-travelers have failed to show up at a special convention at MIT in May, which invited people of the future to travel back in time to prove the feasibility of the technology.

A child who lived in the infamous Amityville Horror house says the portrayal in the movie is wildly inaccurate, although he does confirm that paranormal events definitely occurred.

NASA has offered a \$250,000 prize to the first person or group of researchers that turns lunar soil into breathable oxygen.

The Science Of Doubt



I'm a big fan of Douglas Noel Adams. Despite intimidatingly bad reviews, I faithfully attended the showing of *The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy* at my local movie theatre – knowing full well that it would be an impossibility to recreate the literary and comic genius of DNA on the big screen. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that his books have been a formative influence on my personal philosophies.

That's not to say I agree with everything he had to say (Adams tragically passed away in May 2001, aged just 49). He was an atheist; I'm more of a deist (though with a strong thread of Gnosticism thrown in). And later in his life, he became a vigorous defender of science. I, on the other hand, think science needs to be challenged regularly – for reasons which I'll outline below.

A number of Adams' miscellaneous articles, unpublished writings and musings were released to the public in the post-humorous anthology *The Salmon of Doubt*. The topics range from the benefits of whisky to the dangers of climbing a mountain dressed in a rhino suit; the tone from zany to serious. And as would be expected of an avowed atheist, more than one of the essays delves into the subject of religion.

In the essay "Is There An Artificial God?" (actually a transcript of a 1998 speech), Adams queries the sanctity of religion as a topic of debate and criticism:

Religion...has certain ideas at the heart of it which we call sacred or holy or whatever...we are used to not challenging religious ideas, but it's very interesting

how much of a furor Richard [Dawkins] creates when he does it! Everybody gets absolutely frantic about it because you're not allowed to say these things. Yet when you look at it rationally, there is no reason why those ideas shouldn't be as open to debate as any other.

I couldn't agree more. I might qualify his comments by saying that, in my opinion, the reason for the sanctity is because the topic of religion is one which affects a person to their deepest core – their philosophical framework and worldview has often grown out of that very subject. That certainly doesn't make it exempt from debate – we could only wish that more people challenged the Nazi ideology before it reached critical weight – only that we should at least recognise the reason behind an individual's sensitivity to the subject of religion.

What really surprised me about the sentiments expressed in this speech, however, is that just a few pages earlier in an article titled "Turncoat", Adams had expressed his disgust at a comedian making fun of scientists – recalling it as the moment when he "fell out of love" with the idea of making fun of science (which he readily admits was a part of *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*). The comedian had just told the joke about why aeroplanes aren't made of the material which the virtually indestructible 'black box' is made from:

The audience roared with laughter at how stupid scientists were...but I sat feeling uncomfortable. Was

I just being pedantic to feel that the joke didn't really work because flight recorders are made out of titanium and that if you made planes out of titanium rather than aluminium, they'd be far too heavy to get off the ground in the first place? There was no way of deconstructing the joke that didn't rely on the teller and the audience complacently conspiring together to jeer at someone who knew more than they did. It sent a chill down my spine and it still does.

Actually, it's quite easy to deconstruct the joke to its basic humour: irony. We rely on an indestructible piece of equipment within an object to help us understand why it was destroyed. I certainly don't feel like I'm laughing at science when I react to that joke – although I do laugh at scientists or authors who might feel that it would be wrong to do so. So why did Adams react so strongly?

What this illustrates is that Adams is wrong in saying that only religion has this untouchable sanctity. In reality, as I hinted above, this sanctity arises out of the individual's attachment to any

Don't Panic...



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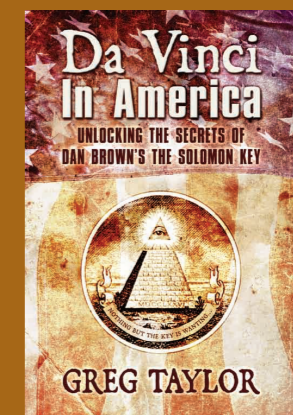
philosophy or worldview. To be sure, religion takes a large portion of the cake when it comes to that topic. But so does modern science – and if you don't believe me, try raising your personal doubts about Darwinian evolution, the age of the Sphinx, or the capabilities of the human mind with the relevant groups of scientists.

Science needs challenging, and all topics should be fair game. If you're a scientist and you're frowning right now, then I rest my case. Our knowledge of the Universe and ourselves can only grow when we live in doubt about all claims, fringe or orthodox. Otherwise, science is just the new religion.

Profile

Greg Taylor is the owner/editor of the online alternative news portal, *The Daily Grail*, and is also the editor of *Sub Rosa Magazine*. He is interested and widely read in topics that challenge the orthodox worldview, from alternative history to the mysteries of human consciousness.

Greg currently resides in Brisbane, Australia, and has recently published his first book. *Da Vinci in America* is a guidebook to the esoteric history and locations likely to be included in Dan Brown's next book, *The Solomon Key*.



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A Spiritual Challenge To The Sceptics



I do not have a million dollars. Nor have I any idea whether James Randi, who in 1996 set up a million dollar prize for anyone who could demonstrate any psychic, supernatural or paranormal ability, has that kind of money. After all, he is a showman first and foremost, and his supposed “prize” funds his ego far more than any serious scientific research. But if I did I would have no hesitation in putting it on the table as a spiritual counter-challenge to him and his sceptic colleagues.

However, I would not take Randi on in the paranormal field of telepathy and telekinesis, as fascinating as these phenomena are. Instead, I would lay out my battlefield using a combination of modern research. First, I would make the argument that modern theoretical physics has amply demonstrated two key facts: that there exist multiple non-physical dimensions about which we can only speculate at present; and that even our supposedly “physical” realm is merely an illusion, because in fact there are no fundamental “building blocks of matter”. Instead, at the subatomic level we have nothing more than minuscule packets of energy whose rate of vibration determines whether or not they are measurable in the “physical” dimension. For those who are not familiar with the concepts of quantum mechanics and string theory, all I will add is that this is genuine accepted science – albeit science that needs much more work – and not fringe speculation.

Second, I would use the evidence of near-death experiences to argue that consciousness

exists independently of the physical brain. The best cases involve the recall of obscure objects or events in operating theatres or other environments that simply could not have arisen by pure guesswork or chance, and which are subsequently independently verified. In all such cases the subjects were at the very least unconscious – which according to conventional science should mean that they were incapable of forming *and then recalling coherent* mental models – and in some they were in deep coma, had been deliberately rendered completely brain dead according to all three medical definitions, or had even been pronounced dead and were lying in a mortuary for three days!

Third, I would evince the evidence of children who spontaneously remember past lives to support the principle of reincarnation. Again, the best evidence in this field involves cases in which the investigators were able to get involved early enough to be able to test the verifiable recall of the subjects under properly monitored conditions. And that is before we even consider the quite incredible evidence of children who have birthmarks or other defects that correspond exactly to the verifiable wounds that caused the death of the past personality they claim to have been.

Fourth, I would back this up with the evidence from hypnotic regression into past lives. Although much of this can be argued to be flawed, there still exist a significant number of cases in which, once again, the details subsequently verified are

Without exception these debunking attempts are reductionist and simplistic in the extreme



At the start of the twenty-first century, we finally have enough material to develop a rational *spiritual* worldview

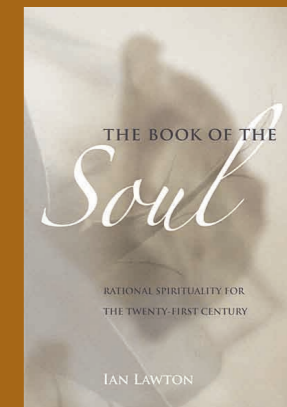
so obscure that they could not be the product of guesswork or chance. Some of the best cases are in fact little known in the West, because they come from Australia.

Now, necessarily I have had to summarise the available evidence here to a ridiculous degree. Any sceptic could pull this summary apart with ease. But in my latest book I have documented all the prime material, and have examined all the paranormal as well as materialist explanations. In this latter context I have analysed all the attempts by the usual suspect sceptics – members of CSICOP such as Paul Kurtz, Martin Gardner, Susan Blackmore and Richard Wiseman – to debunk the evidence that has been collated in these different fields. And I have to report that this latter exercise is none too demanding. Without exception these debunking attempts are reductionist and simplistic in the extreme – in fact laughably so – and make no attempt whatsoever to address the full *range* and *depth* of the various aspects of evidence presented in the now tens of thousands of cases of near-death experience, and of spontaneous or hypnotic past-life recall. Indeed, the real alternative to a spiritual explanation is downright fraud right across the board – and even most sceptics would accept that this is not a tenable proposition.

That is why I use this ensemble of modern evidence to argue that, at the start of the twenty-first century, we finally have enough material to develop a *rational spiritual* worldview. One which on the balance of probabilities – and while accepting that we do not yet have all the answers – is a far more logical way of looking at the world than that put forward by the atheist western intellectual elite. Nor does it rely on the revealed wisdom of old, which in too many cases proves

Profile

Ian Lawton was born in 1959. Formerly a chartered accountant and IT consultant, he turned his back on the commercial world in his mid-thirties to become a full-time writer-researcher on ancient civilizations, esoterica and spirituality. His first two books, *Giza: The Truth* and *Genesis Unveiled*, were published by Virgin and have sold over 30,000 copies worldwide, gaining widespread acclaim for their scholarly balancing of the best of orthodox and alternative thinking. His most recent work, *The Book of the Soul: Rational Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century*, is available direct from his website at www.ianlawton.com,  URL or via Amazon UK.  URL



to contain serious distortions.

So, my challenge to any materialist sceptic is this. Take a look at the evidence I have presented. Make a genuine attempt to provide a rational, materialist explanation for *all* of it, rather than just any bits that you might like to cherry-pick because you think they provide easy targets. If you succeed, then I cannot give you a million pounds, but your reward will be to sleep easy in your bed, safe in the knowledge that your materialist worldview does stand up to the closest intellectual scrutiny. But if you fail, as I strongly suspect you will, then just ask yourself this one question: “What am I so *afraid* of?”

Mystics And Brain Scientists: The Great Convergence



Back in the 1940s, the Russian sociologist Pitirim Sorokin was writing about the decline and bankruptcy of what he called “sensate culture.” He felt a new non-sensate driven culture was faintly discernible on the fiery horizon of the 20th century. There were signs of worldviews in transformation.

The belief that apocalyptic change is possible goes back to the Hebrew prophets, and to Zoroaster, where the idea of true novelty was born. The same expectations of renewal still haunt us at the dawn of the 21st century, except that today science is the keystone to the New Jerusalem. In this column — this is the first — we’ll ring some changes on the “new paradigm archetype” (a way of talking about our perennial passion to “Revise the Big Picture”).

Not to be shy about grabbing the metaphysical bull by the horns, let’s start with a book that puts mysticism on the map of neuroscience. What (the late) Eugene d’Aquili and Andrew Newberg have done in *The Mystical Mind* (1999) is provide authoritative speculation on how the brain might mediate mystical consciousness. This is important because if some scholars are right, mysticism is the living core of all religions, and even prophecy and shamanism may be seen as derivative by comparison.

Much to their credit, d’Aquili & Newberg resist the temptation to reduce mystical experience to “neurochemical flux.” They acknowledge the primacy of consciousness. They call attention to what may be the most interesting, if not the most

important, psychological experience. They then try to integrate it — nonreductively — into the latest brain science. This brings mysticism inside the camp of science; and by rhetorical magic makes it more “real” and “legitimate.”

Using imaging technologies to monitor the brains of advanced Buddhist and Catholic nun meditators, they found that some parts of the brain were excited to greater activity while others were selectively inhibited. By willing to empty one’s mind of all thoughts, a part of the brain that helps distinguish subject from object, self from other, is damped down, creating an experience of unbounded consciousness.

It appears that mystics are very clever. They have discovered how to manipulate their brains in order to experience pure unitary consciousness; a state described as ineffable, beyond all rational efforts, and (*nota bene*) intrinsically blissful. This whole evolutionary

ploy is startling. As soon as the brain gets smart enough, it turns around and figures out how to transcend itself. The mystic is drawn to entering these seductive states, at first transiently, of undifferentiated consciousness.

Plausible neuropsychological accounts show how mental training may induce this. This may be one of the finest achievements of our species — the experimental discovery of the mystical mind. Several approaches to inducing such states are known. Besides spontaneous mystical states, Rick Strassman has published accounts of psychedelic (DMT) induction of mystical states and Stan Grof uses dramatic breathing

The fear of death
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eternity

Meditation remains the old standby for most sailors of the sea of spirit

techniques to invoke transpersonal states. But meditation — the persistent stimulation of the prefrontal brain — remains the old standby for most sailors of the sea of spirit. The good news is that a pro-active stance before the mysteries is possible; a kind of science, if you will, of inspiration.

Many believe that mystical experience is the common core of the great religions. They argue that it would be wise to rally around the central unifying experience of humankind. Instead of divisive doctrine, they suggest, let us seek unitive experience. In light of the current global conflict between Bush’s Christian messianism and Al-Qaeda’s anti-infidelism, talk of exploring the mystical core of religion may seem utopian, but then so did countless great ideas that often came haltingly before their time.

Some experts think mysticism is pathological or regressive. Others see therapeutic indicators of higher reaches of human development, as for example in Buddhism, which revolves around methods of inducing nirvana, a mystical state of consciousness.

Mystics enjoy intuitive knowledge of immortality, according to Bucke’s *Cosmic Consciousness*. The fear of death vanishes placed against the brilliant light of eternity. A shift in attitude toward death like this would be pivotal to society — the impact on medicine, for one thing, enormous; the effect on personality, unpredictable but probably benign.

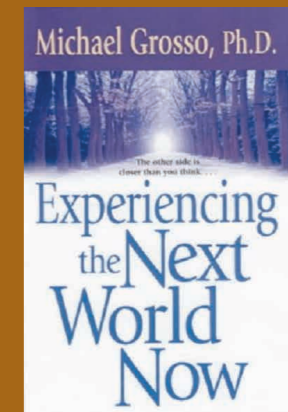
Suppose the quest for the highest consciousness was funded. Suppose there were a National Pure Consciousness Center of Research and Practice. At last, a true scientific psychology whose premise is to explore the most extraordinary human states. The new marriage of brain science and mysticism would make it possible to train oneself to experience mystical states.

Who can predict the impact if people, as

Profile

Michael Grosso is a teacher, author, and painter, whose interests span psychical research, metaphysical art, the parapsychology of religion, and, primarily, philosophy. He received his Ph.D. in philosophy, and studied classical Greek, at Columbia University. He has published books on topics ranging from life after death to the mythologies of endtime.

He presently lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, where he is affiliated with the Division of Personality Studies of UVA. Michael’s most recent book is titled *Experiencing the Next World Now*, which surveys the evidence for life after death and shows how personal experience can convince you it is real.



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part of normal education, all underwent the changes likely to result from experiencing pure consciousness? Imagine, in short, mass philosophical shock therapy. All one can say is that the evolutionary speculations of Bucke, Myers, and Aurobindo, seem more credible in light of the idea of this great convergence. If a paradigm built on mystical experience became dominant, it would probably mean the end of the world as we know it.

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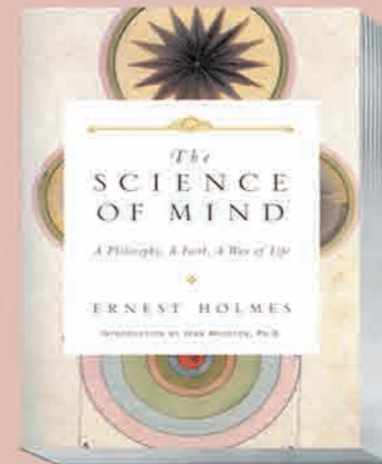
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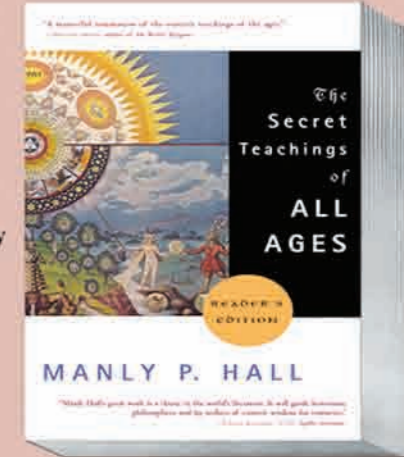
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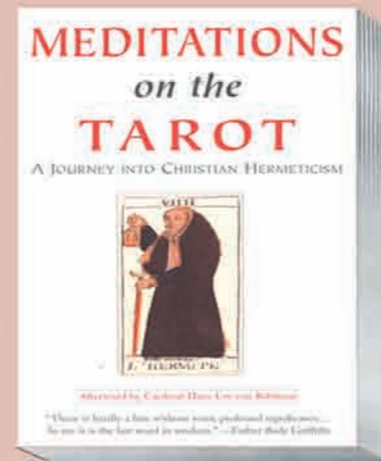
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Schoch To The System



In ancient Greek mythology, the Sphinx was a monster with the face of a woman, the chest and feet of a lion, and wings like a bird of prey. It would ask riddles of people who passed by, and if they could not answer, the Sphinx would eat them alive. Perhaps this ancient tale should be taken as fair warning that the Sphinx does not look kindly upon those who attempt to solve her mysteries.

Fast forward to June 1990, and Dr Robert Schoch - a young American geologist - stood before the Great Sphinx at Giza for the very first time, perhaps unaware of the academic uproar he was about to invoke. On that fateful morning, he walked up to the archaeological enigma seeking to answer a question posed by the author John Anthony West: "What is the true age of the Sphinx?" West had noticed that erosion marks on the ancient monument suggested water had played a part in its history, which appeared to

argue against the orthodox dating of the Sphinx to around 2400 BCE, and the reign of the Egyptian pharaoh Khafre.

Schoch studied the erosion patterns on the limestone body of the Sphinx, analysed sub-surface weathering patterns via seismic surveys, and compared the climatic history of the Giza area. His conclusion was stunning: the Great Sphinx was not only built before Khafre's time, but that its origins must go back into the fog of pre-history, at the very least to 5000 BCE and perhaps even earlier.

Schopenhauer once wrote: "Every truth passes through three stages before it is recognized. In the first it is ridiculed, in the second it is opposed, in the

third it is regarded as self evident." For the last fifteen years, Robert Schoch has lived through the reality of Schopenhauer's observation, although he's still working on the third stage:

The question is not whether the Great Sphinx is older than the traditional dating, but how much older



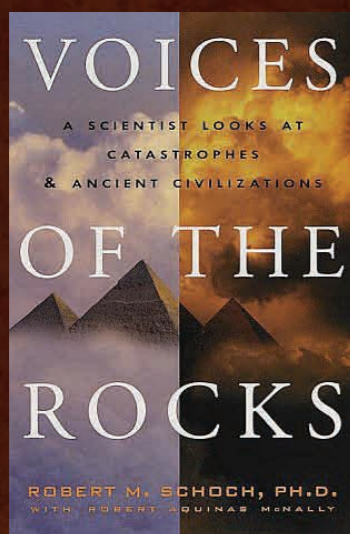
Robert Schoch studying the Khufu cartouche in the 'relieving chamber' of the Great Pyramid. (Photo courtesy of R. Schoch © 2004)


I diligently wrote papers on the subject and presented talks at geological and Egyptological conferences, and despite the animosity toward the implications of my analysis, the analysis itself stood up to scrutiny.


It might be fairer to say that Schoch is just getting a taste for the action though. Last year he released a book, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, which departed from his work on the Sphinx and moved into the controversial area of diffusionism, and the

Voices Of The Rocks

Previous to *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, Robert Schoch released the widely-acclaimed *Voices of the Rocks*. This book tells the story of Schoch's primary role in the 'Age of the Sphinx' debate, and how his findings led him to question the orthodox view of history. *Voices of the Rocks* explores the evidence for high cultures in antiquity, and the possibility that great catastrophes have been responsible for their destruction. This book is an excellent introduction to the controversy surrounding the Great Sphinx, as well as to the subjects of diffusionism and catastrophism.



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question of an ancient 'high culture' which spread its influence around the globe. And he aims to take this quest to the next level in June this year, when his next book *Pyramid Quest*, is released.

Schoch maintains an incredible regime of writing, research and teaching - alongside his 'alternative' books he has also published scholarly works such as *Horns, Tusks, & Flippers: The Evolution of Hoofed Mammals* and *Phylogeny Reconstruction in Paleontology*, and he also holds down a lecturing position with Boston University. We managed to corner him for a few minutes though, and posed some riddles of our own to him. Thankfully, no post-riddle eating was required.

Sub Rosa: The 'Age of the Sphinx' debate has been one of the great archaeological controversies over the past fifteen years. A lot of discussion has ensued since the water-weathering theory was first put forward. Could you update readers on where we are currently, and if your view has changed at all in response to contributions from other researchers, such as Gauri and Reader?

“It is the nature of science to doubt and question the accepted wisdom”

Schoch: Independently of my work, and independent of each other, the geologists David Coxill and Colin Reader have each confirmed my core hypothesis regarding the age of the Great Sphinx, namely that the earliest portion is older than the common modern Egyptological attribution to the reign of the pharaoh Khafre, circa 2500 B.C. Some of the critics continue to suggest ad hoc and geologically unfeasible and unrealistic scenarios to maintain the traditional dating, but as I discuss in the appendix to *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, their arguments are not sound in my opinion. The real issue is not if the Sphinx is older than Khafre, but how much older and the significance of this greater antiquity.



Pyramids at Giza, Egypt. (Photograph © Caroline Davies)

SR: Having said that, your theory remains controversial and is not accepted by most orthodox Egyptologists. Someone commented on MSNBC's "Cosmic Log", that if we can work out Martian history based on a robot's observations, then surely a group of geologists should be able to figure out a consensus concerning the age of the Sphinx. Why do you think this hasn't happened yet, and considering this - will it ever? How do you go about removing any shred of doubt about your findings?

Schoch: I would disagree with the basic premise of the question. Science, ultimately, is not an issue of consensus (although generally that comes along at some point), but a matter of gathering data and cogently analysing and interpreting it. At any given time, the majority can be wrong, or the majority can be right. It is the nature of science to doubt and question the accepted wisdom. Scientific "truth" is not arrived at by a committee recommendation. In the case of the Great Sphinx, whenever I have presented my data and analyses, most geologists have found it compelling, but I don't expect them to publicly "endorse" it without pursuing their own field studies, and the typical geologist does not have the incentive, time, money, or interest

for such. Egyptologists, on the other hand, with a vested interest in the status quo, continue to search for ad hoc alternative explanations to explain away the data. For my part, I plan to continue the research, gathering ever more data that bears on the age of the Great Sphinx.

SR: You mentioned the Sphinx update in the Appendix to *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* - in the rest of this book you take a step away from the field of geology into some of the more controversial areas of archaeology, with a focus on pyramids. Has archaeology always been a topic of interest to yourself, or is it simply an outgrowth of your work with John Anthony West on the Sphinx at Giza?

Schoch: Archaeology and ancient civilizations have always been an interest of mine. I began studying ancient coins when I was twelve. I was involved in local archaeological digs in Virginia as a teenager. I used to skip classes during high school to walk a couple of blocks to the local public library and read Plato, Suetonius, Josephus, and other ancient writers. In college as an undergraduate I started with an interest in archaeology, but got sidetracked into anthropology and geology. I've never lost my interest in archaeology, however.

“ I believe that the Yonaguni structure is natural, with the slight possibility of some human use and possible subtle human modification of what is primarily a natural feature ”

SR: The book looks at the distribution of ‘pyramid cultures’ around the world, and brings up many arguments for diffusionism - especially in regards to the New World (countering the standard Bering Land Bridge theory). Have you kept up to date with the latest work by Silvia Gonzalez and do you think that this provides solid supporting evidence for your own research?

Schoch: You are referring to the research by Silvia Gonzalez suggesting that at least some of the first Americans may have come from Australia (possibly via Polynesia and Japan). Based on the evidence as related in the media, I think she makes a good case. This is exciting material and I welcome her findings; yes, her work is certainly compatible with my research. More and more evidence is accumulating to support widespread transoceanic diffusion in ancient times.

SR: Do you worry that including structures such as Newgrange as ‘pyramid structures’ weakens the case put forward by *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, and perhaps leaves the book open to easy - or at least superficial - attack by skeptics?

Schoch: I think of it as a superficial attack by skeptics who will attack anyway. One thing I learned from the Sphinx controversy is that a certain ilk of skeptics (the “debunkers”) will attack whenever they feel their paradigms and the status quo are questioned. Concerning Newgrange specifically, if you look at what I actually say about it, and where

I include discussion of Newgrange in the book (in a section titled “Pyramids or Not?”), I make it clear that I consider Newgrange and similar structures as not “core pyramids” per se, but structures related to the broader family of pyramid-like monuments. I would also comment that Newgrange and many other structures, including good true pyramids in Egypt, are today in such ruinous condition that it is easy to casually dismiss them as not pyramids but simply “mounds.”

SR: Moving to another archaeological controversy that you’ve been involved with, you’ve visited the enigmatic Yonaguni underwater site off the coast of Japan a number of times. What’s your current view on the structures there - artificial or natural?

Schoch: I believe that the Yonaguni structure is natural, with the slight possibility of some human use and possible subtle human modification of what is primarily a natural feature. There is independent evidence of ancient human habitation on Yonaguni Island, but that is a far cry from “proving” that the so-called Yonaguni Monument is an artificial human-made construct.

SR: While on the topic of Yonaguni, I was bemused when the controversial *Horizon* documentary (which attempted to debunk Atlantis theories, and in particular the work of Graham Hancock) used your testimony about Yonaguni to discredit Hancock’s theories, but at the same time ignored your geological expertise when it came to the Sphinx argument. Did this bother you at all?

Schoch: Sure it bothered me. It doesn’t quite strike



Undersea Yonaguni
(photograph © Robert Schoch)

me as “fair” and I had hoped for a more balanced approach on the part of *Horizon*.

SR: Dr Zahi Hawass has been quite outspoken in his criticism of your findings, which seems to present a large problem in ever getting new permits to do ‘real’ research on the Plateau. How do you see your relationship with Dr Hawass, and are you still able to access the Sphinx enclosure?

Schoch: I have met and spoken with Dr. Hawass many times, enjoying a meal and his company on more than a few occasions. He has never been particularly critical of me in person and we are on friendly terms, although he has certainly told me more than once that he disagrees with my analysis relative to the dating of the Sphinx. I consider his criticism to be directed primarily at the implications of my findings and at people who have taken my

The New Book: Pyramid Quest

There have been whispers in the alternative research community that the next book by Robert Schoch will be a monumental work on the topic of the Great Pyramid and ‘lost civilisations’ of antiquity. On the brink of its release we’re happy to provide the publisher’s synopsis of the new book:

Pyramid Quest: Secrets of the Great Pyramid and the Dawn of Civilization
by Robert M. Schoch, Ph.D. and Robert Aquinas McNally

The geologist acclaimed for re-dating the Great Sphinx at Giza sets his sights on one of the true mysteries of antiquity: the Great Pyramid of Giza.

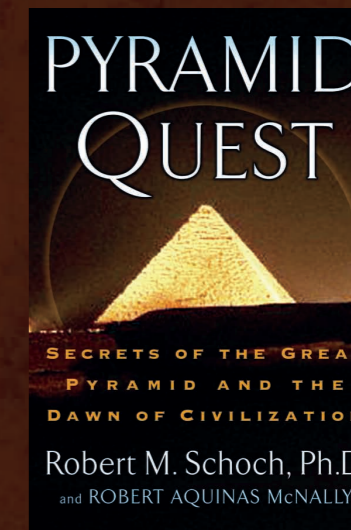
What is the Great Pyramid of Giza? Ask that basic question of a traditional Egyptologist, and you receive the basic, traditional answer: A fancy tombstone for a self-important pharaoh of the Old Kingdom. This, Egyptologists argue, is the sole finding based on the data, and the only deduction supported by science.

By implication, anyone who dissents from this point of view is unscientific and woolly-minded, a believer in magic and ghosts. Indeed, some of the dissenting ideas about the Great Pyramid do have a spectacularly fabulous ring to them. Yet, beneath the obvious terms of this controversy, a deeper, more significant question arises. How is it that the Great Pyramid exercises such a gripping hold on the human psyche – adding

cryptic grace to the back of the dollar bill and framing myriad claims of New Age “pyramid power?”

Pyramid Quest uses the rigorous intellectual analysis of scientific inquiry to investigate what we know about the Great Pyramid – and develops a stunning hypothesis: This ancient monument is the strongest proof yet that civilization began thousands of years earlier than generally thought, extending far back into a little-known, almost-forgotten time. In tracing that story, we come to understand not only the Great Pyramid itself but also our own origins as civilized beings.

Read our own review of *Pyramid Quest* later in this issue.



data and analysis and “run with it,” often to push an agenda that is not my agenda. On an informal basis, Dr. Hawass has never denied me access to the Sphinx enclosure. To bring in equipment and pursue formal studies, that is another matter, and not appropriate to discuss further here. I do not believe, however, that Dr. Hawass is trying to stifle research; rather, he has many considerations besides the purely scientific that he must take into account before he can approve of permits.

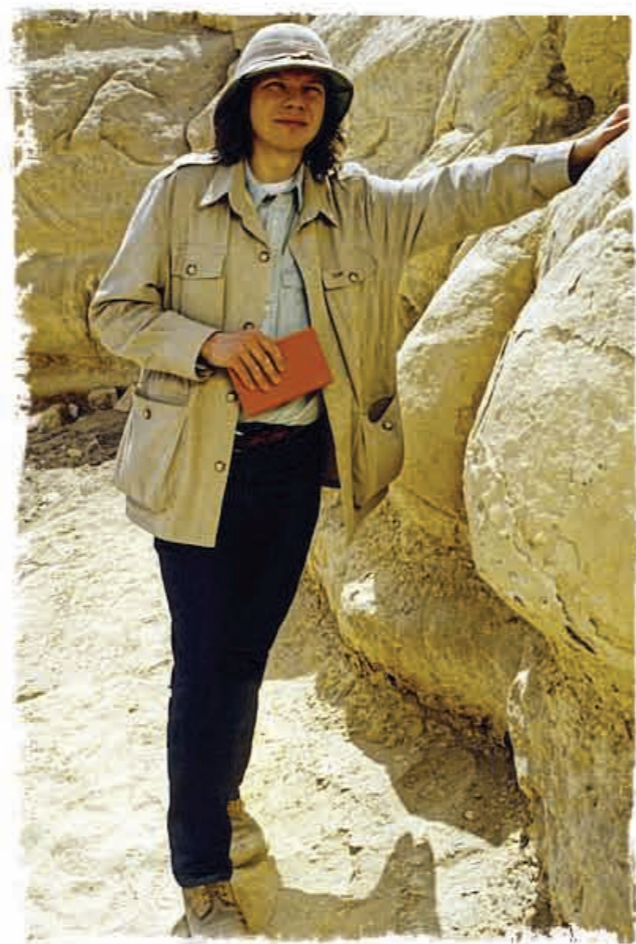
SR: In closing - is the possibility of more recent heavy rainfall an alternative option in explaining the erosion on the Sphinx? What about the quality of the limestone?

Schoch: The paleo-hydrology of the Giza Plateau has been elucidated by the work of geologist Colin Reader. We now know that the majority of water run-off, affecting the western and southern walls of the Sphinx enclosure, ended with the quarrying work that took place during the construction of the Great Pyramid, circa 2550 B.C. This means that the earliest portions of the Great Sphinx

finest for building purposes, but is not of as poor quality as some writers have suggested. I believe that the oldest portions of the Sphinx must date back to pre-dynastic times, although the Sphinx was repaired and reworked (including a re-carving of the head) in dynastic times. Corroborating the pre-dynastic dating, I stand by my analysis of the subsurface weathering under the floor of the Sphinx enclosure, which by my most conservative calibrations (that is, those that would give the youngest date for the initial carving) indicate a date well prior to dynastic times.

For more information and updates on the research of Dr Robert Schoch, visit his official website. [🌐 URL](#)

For a full review of Robert's latest book *Pyramid Quest* see our REVIEWS section



Robert Schoch in the Sphinx enclosure (photograph © Caroline Davies)


“ I do not believe, however, that Dr. Hawass is trying to stifle research ”

must predate the Great Pyramid. Therefore the traditional dating for the Sphinx, which places it after the Great Pyramid, is wrong. The question is not whether the Great Sphinx is older than the traditional dating, but how much older.

Yes, I am aware that it can still rain on the Giza Plateau, even with occasional flash floods (although quite rarely). However, in my assessment the extent and nature of the substantial surface weathering and erosion seen on the walls of the Sphinx enclosure and the body of the Sphinx is only compatible with an initial date for the quarrying of the core body of the Sphinx that is significantly older than the Fourth Dynasty.

This is the case even when we take into account the quality of the limestone here, which is not the

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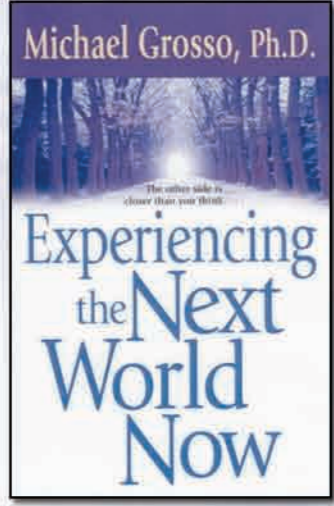
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The Hyper-Dimensional Ambassador: Terence McKenna

Terence McKenna was for some more guru than a man whose lifestyle had been moulded by very deep experiences of an alternative reality. For the rest of his life, he would strive to bring awareness of that dimension to our reality.

by Philip Coppens



Each issue, in this section, we will be profiling an influential figure in the alternative paradigm genre. To start us off, Philip Coppens explores the world of Terence McKenna...

When Terence McKenna was diagnosed with a brain tumour in May 1999, he asked the doctor whether his life of experimental drug taking might have contributed to the disease. His doctor stated that there was no evidence to say it did, but that there was suggestive evidence that cannabis might actually force brain tumours to shrink. McKenna wryly pointed out that this “suggestive evidence” must be erroneous, as otherwise he would never have developed one. The anecdote is typical of McKenna’s wit and reasoning, which propelled him into an almost guru-like status – though he never was or was even considered a guru in the negative meaning of the word.

The drug experience in its native setting was not about pleasure; it was about knowledge acquisition

McKenna was not a pioneer per se. Most of the hallucinogenic research had already been performed in the early to middle parts of the 20th century by academics. If anything, McKenna was a child of the 1960s, graduating from UC Berkeley, majoring in ecology, resource conservation and shamanism – a typical Berkeley 1960 degree that was soon abandoned by the university where some suggest a whiff of cannabis can still be sensed on campus.

With his diploma in hand, McKenna set off for India and later the Amazon, where he studied the native hallucinogenic drugs used in various South American shamanic traditions. The specific



search was for oo-koo-hé, a plant preparation containing DMT – dimethyltryptamine, a drug naturally produced by the brain. But study in the field implied student participation; rather than being caught up in the 1960s Western drug culture, here McKenna was confronted with the origins of the drug cult. Thus, at La Chorrera, at the urging of his brother Dennis, he allowed himself to be the subject of a psychedelic experiment which he claimed put him in contact with The Logos: an informative, hallucinatory voice nearly universal to the visionary experience.

His brother would remain an instrumental part of his life. Together they were amongst the first

McKenna advanced the startling theory that the evolutionary track leading to the development of modern humans was sparked by the consumption of psilocybin mushrooms by cavemen

who brought back their shamanic experiences to the Western world. But though they were scientists, they were not reporting to other academics; they were reporting to the general public about the growth, use and knowledge that these plants could teach humanity. That the Amazonian town of Iquitos is now a major centre for the “hallucinogenic tourist” is largely the result of McKenna and the following he created, with a goal to witness a native drug culture, rather than the consumerised Western equivalent of it. The drug experience in its native setting was not about pleasure; it was about knowledge acquisition. It was not about escapism; it was engaging with Nature and looking into the mirror.

Terence McKenna has been described as humanity’s first ambassador to the hyper-dimensional inhabitants. That is not necessarily true – he was however the first to be sent back from that dimension with a message to the Western world, from those denizens.

McKenna advocated the use of drugs, and particularly organic hallucinogens, specifically ayahuasca, which contained DMT. McKenna furthermore believed that his experiences through DMT were real and spiritually significant – they were not hallucinations; they opened a doorway into another dimension. DMT was a substance native to the brain and ayahuasca played with its normal operations, thus ‘opening the door’ for a limited period of time. It allowed the mind to enter another dimension.

Once on the other side, McKenna stated that the shamanic explorer would find other forms of life in the universe. With the rising popularity of UFOs, McKenna began to preach that this phenomenon was linked with his ‘hyperspace’. The DMT experience was similar if not identical to the ‘abduction experience’, in which he believed the hyperspace creatures which he called ‘machine elves’ were seen as aliens in UFOs. It was merely the latest realisation, after their manifestation as faeries, elves or angels.

McKenna mapped the history of drug usage, specifically of DMT and psilocybin, arguing that both drugs had been used throughout the ages in humanity’s effort to enter that dimension and speak with these otherworldly creatures. He believed these denizens had helped humanity throughout the ages. The extraordinary and anomalous wisdom that had often gone into ancient monuments (from the pyramids in Egypt to the equally enigmatic giant constructions in Middle and Southern America) might have been inspired and facilitated via knowledge from these denizens: giving shamans specific information on building techniques – like these denizens had given the shamans specific information on other subjects, specifically medicine. McKenna would argue that if cultures across the world had built pyramids for

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their gods, then this was not evidence of physical contact. McKenna believed that the shamans of each culture might have entered 'hyperspace', where they made contact with an intelligence that had been around for a long time. The various cultures, across time and space, that contacted it, would come away with the same message.

His historical study included an analysis of our modern era, where 'true drugs' had been outlawed, but substitute drugs such as cigarettes, caffeine and sugar were widely available. McKenna found the notion of outlawing a plant absurd, and he viciously indicted the societal power structure that made possession of hallucinogens a capital crime, while peddling refined sugar to children and subsidizing tobacco and alcohol production. The latter had addictive qualities and negative health effects, whereas his drugs – specifically DMT – had never shown any addictive quality. Nevertheless, it was a Class A drug.

In *Food of the Gods*, largely the conclusion of his historical studies, McKenna advanced the startling theory that the evolutionary track leading to the development of modern humans was sparked by the consumption of psilocybin mushrooms by cavemen. We would not have been 'us' without the mushroom. Specifically, he argued that psilocybin produced an enhanced visual acuity, theorising that primates who lived in areas where the mushrooms thrived, gained an evolutionary advantage in hunting. The mushrooms stimulated the verbal centres of the brain. With consistent use over time,



Psilocybin mushrooms - food of the Gods?

He did not see drug usage as a recreational activity, but considered the drug user as a priest, maintaining the sacred bond between us and the Otherworld

the primates began to associate the sounds with communicative concepts, resulting in language.

He extrapolated from this premise towards our current society, whereby he felt that people whose life was devoid of the hallucinogenic experience were not truly 'human': the liberating and wisdom-receiving experience of 'the trip' was absent, making them more like cattle, more easy to manipulate by leaders – in short, they were not enlightened. He framed these findings in the context of various mystery traditions, which preached that through specific techniques, some of which were drug based, the initiate was 'reborn' as an 'Illuminatus', an enlightened being – someone who had seen the divine light of hyperspace.

From his very first experiences, the denizens of hyperspace had given McKenna a mathematical formula which became known as 'novelty' and 'Timewave Zero'. At first, McKenna had no apparent use for it. It was said to be a system that showed how 'new things' – novelty – would spring about in our timeline. Time itself was a fractal wave of novelty – the output from this wave. Time was thus built around a series of new ideas and paradigm shifts: events that changed the world.

The problem was how to anchor the formula in our calendar – where the wave would collapse into a zero point. After some study, McKenna decided that the anchor should be on December 21, 2012 AD, which he later also identified as the end-date of the Mayan calendar.

The Timewave has remained a subject of intrigue after McKenna's death, specifically with the September 11, 1999 attacks and the December 26, 2004 Asian tsunami. McKenna argued that 2012 would be an "eschaton" – a tremendous collapse



" I could see the light of eternity, *a la* William Blake, shining through every leaf. I mean, a bug walking across the ground moved me to tears. "

of time, forcing us to enter a new time. Though that might indeed be the purpose of the Timewave, the denizens did not anchor it in our timeline – McKenna did. Hence, the 2012 anchor is not a certitude, but only a theory. Though the Timewave does largely coincide with significant events that the Western media reports on, no scientific classification of what comprises novelty on a global scale means – nor how to time it. Did the world change at September 11, or when Bush decided to invade Afghanistan? And though it enthralled the media, was it truly a global event? And does it matter whether or not humanity does change, or merely that the event that might change humanity happens? These questions remain...

McKenna was a prolific speaker: if chosen as an ambassador by the denizens of hyperspace, their choice was excellent. McKenna combined a unique voice with a specific, intriguing method of delivery, whether in public or in private. Many of his phrases were used by shamanic-inspired popular artists, from The Shamen to Eat Static and Shpongle.

I had the pleasure of meeting McKenna twice and briefly corresponding with him. At our first meeting in July 1995, I was largely sceptical of the man behind the message, classifying him in a category of people who say a lot, but with little of any true value. But his public lectures and interventions, as well as private discussions, quickly revealed that McKenna was very glossy, but with a most intriguing core.

He was a man of many layers; for most, he was a man prophesying the benefits of drug usage. A smaller group realised that he did not see drug usage as a recreational activity, but considered the drug user as a priest, maintaining the sacred bond between us and the Otherworld – the Logos – God. A small circle realised that by following in McKenna's footsteps, they would be able to retrieve real knowledge from that dimension.

But it seems that by 1999 McKenna was tiring from constantly travelling and his missionary work, and contemplated retiring from the public eye. Perhaps it was merely temporarily, hoping to surrender himself more to the exploration of hyperspace, rather than talking about it. Does a priest merely have to talk about God to his flock, or have private time to seek out the divine as well?

On May 22, 1999, McKenna's 52-year-old mind exploded. Non-drug induced hallucinations cut in like shards of glass; taste and smell were bent out of shape; and he was swallowed up by a labyrinth that, as he later put it, "somehow partook of last week's dreams, next week's fears, and a small restaurant in Dublin." Then his blood pressure dropped and he collapsed, the victim of a brain seizure. Like John Travolta in the movie *Phenomenon*, McKenna had achieved a physical condition that allowed him access to another dimension – but it would also be a fatal one.

McKenna was given a six to nine months life-expectancy. Experimental treatment seemed to


give the desired effect and by November, scans showed the tumour had gone into remission. However, it was clear that Terence had been summoned to definitively pass through "The Gate", and the tumour returned. He finally passed through – this time without a return – on April 3, 2000.

Death had never been a specific topic for McKenna. The door to hyperspace had swung so many times... But having been given a "finality", he realised that living in the knowledge that one will die, made life rich and poignant. He said: "I could see the light of eternity, a la William Blake, shining through every leaf. I mean, a bug walking across the ground moved me to tears." McKenna realised that given a limited amount of time focused the brain: "If most people took it seriously, a hell of a lot more would be done with more attention to quality and intent."

He had always assumed he would see 2012, but now wouldn't. "Very few prophets live to see their prophecies – Joachim de Fiore didn't, Marx didn't. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen, it doesn't need cheerleading. It's built into the morphology of space and time. That's all a very funny thing about me and my career that's different from Leary, different from all of these people: this strange relationship to prophecy and the eschaton. My fans don't understand any of that stuff, and my critics don't understand much of it either. So we all just have to put up with it until it clears itself out of the way."

But at the same time, he did not want to make his death into an event, like dying on the net or entering discussions about cryogenics. "I think part of what death is about biologically is reshuffling the gene-pool. If genes were to last forever, death would never have entered the scheme of things." Until the end, he continued to think and preach...

Philip Coppens is a respected researcher and author on many historical and contemporary mysteries. His website contains information on his research and writing career, as well as many articles on a diverse range of topics.

<http://www.philipcoppens.com> 

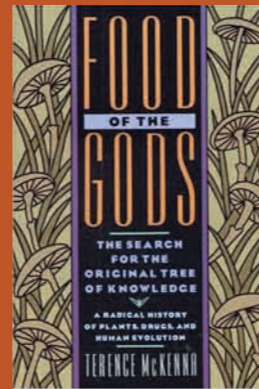
The Machine Elf Primer

Food of the Gods, by Terence McKenna

In this book, McKenna puts forth his theory that psilocybin mushrooms have played an important part in the evolution of modern humans, acting as the 'Tree of Knowledge'. He also says that the lack of modern exploration with psychedelics could lead to the collapse of civilisation.

Amazon US: 

Amazon UK: 



The Invisible Landscape, by Terence McKenna and Dennis McKenna

A cult classic, now in reprint, in which the McKenna brothers discuss shamanism, altered states of consciousness, and the organic unity of the King Wen sequence of the I Ching.

Amazon US: 

Amazon UK: 



The Archaic Revival, by Terence McKenna

A collection of essays, interviews, and narrative adventures by Terence McKenna taking the reader on a journey from the depths of the Amazon to the hidden recesses of the human psyche.

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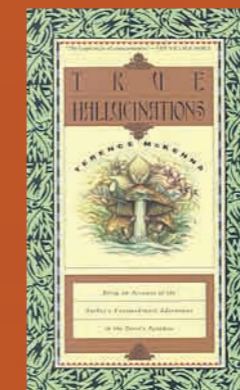


True Hallucinations, by Terence McKenna

A surreal narrative in which the McKenna brothers and a small band of friends head to the Amazon Basin in search of the shamanic entheogens, an expedition which results in a journey of unreality.

Amazon US: 

Amazon UK: 



Strange Attractor DVD, featuring Terence McKenna

A "relentless mutating ingression of audio and visual imagery", using McKenna as the focus, which takes the viewer to the borders of hyperspace – no assistance required.

Amazon US: 

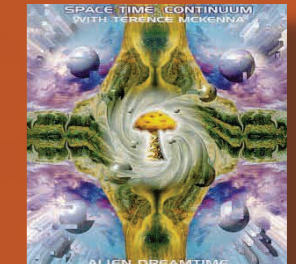


Alien Dreamtime CD, featuring Terence McKenna

An audio montage of McKenna lecturing on all the topics associated with him, from the archaic revival to Timewave Zero, with atmospheric background music enhancing the experience.

Amazon US: 

Amazon UK: 





(photograph © whatthebleep.com)

What is reality? Over the past century, Newtonian physics and reductionist science have combined to put the squeeze on metaphysical thinking regarding the nature of reality. However, new cutting-edge research into consciousness and quantum physics is beginning to open the door to what can only be called a more 'mystical' view of the Universe.

Stuart Hameroff M.D., Professor Emeritus at the Departments of Anesthesiology and

Psychology, and Director of the Center for Consciousness Studies at the University of Arizona is at the forefront of this new wave of thinking. In fact, his research combines the fields of consciousness and quantum physics, and with acclaimed physicist Sir Roger Penrose he has put forward an alternative model of consciousness, based on quantum computations in structures within neurons known as microtubules.

This new model has provoked much debate and controversy in the consciousness research

community. We talked to Dr Hameroff recently about his hypothesis, and asked him to elaborate on the possibilities that arise from such a view of consciousness, and 'reality':

Sub Rosa: Greetings Stuart, and thanks for taking the time to talk with us. First off, can I start by asking you to describe, as best possible in 'everyday' terms, the current paradigm's view of consciousness, and how your 'quantum consciousness' hypothesis differs from it. Also, what are these 'microtubules', which play such a large part in your idea?

Stuart Hameroff: The prevalent paradigm is that brain neurons (nerve cells) and synapses (connections between nerve cells) act like bits and switches in computers, that consciousness is essentially computation, basically no different (except in degree of complexity) from what is happening in your laptop. Microtubules are the structural components inside neurons, part of the

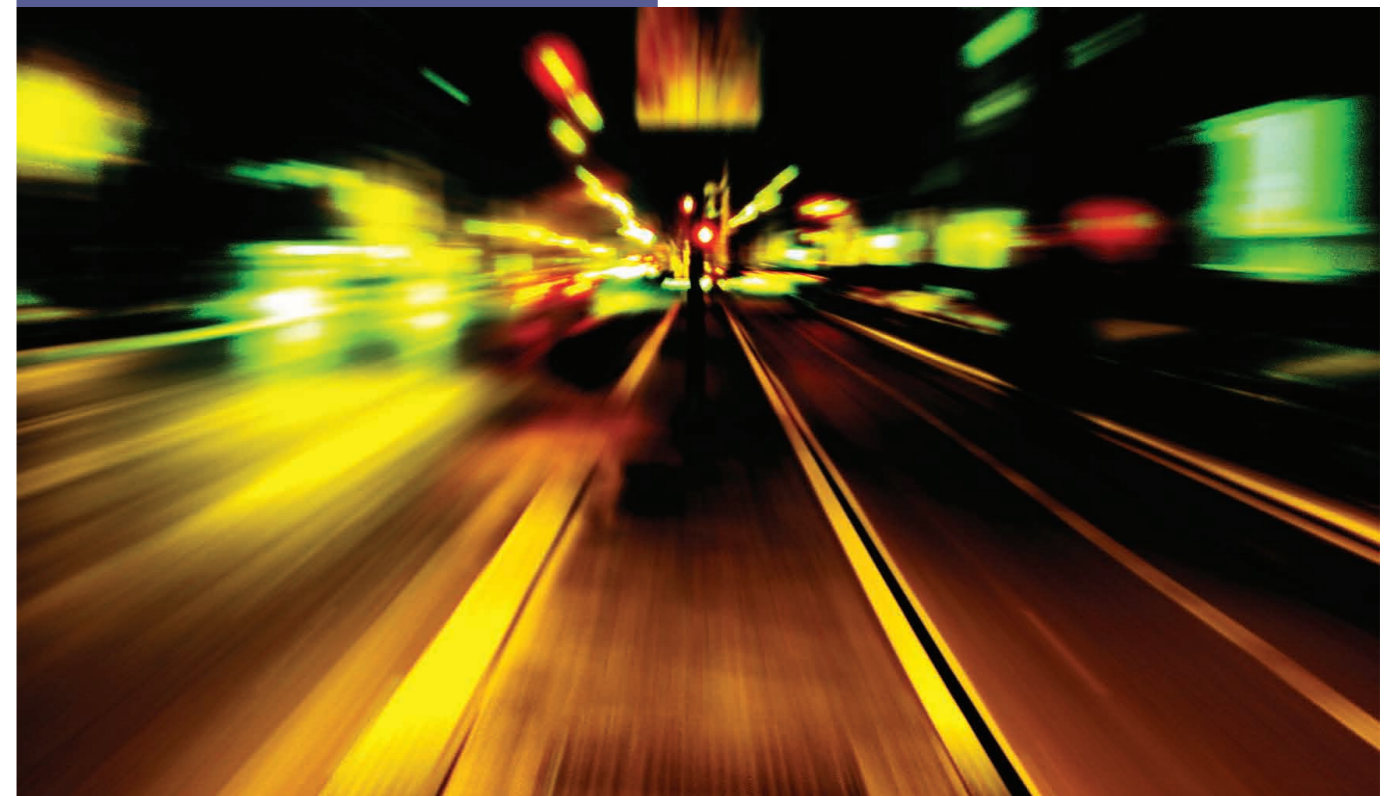
cell cytoskeleton. But in addition to being bony girders, they seem to also process information - the nervous system within each cell.

The Penrose-Hameroff quantum consciousness hypothesis proposes that quantum computations in microtubules inside the brain's neurons convert pre/sub-conscious possibilities (manifesting as dream-like quantum information) to particular information (choices, perceptions) by a type of quantum state reduction, or collapse of the wave function. The reduction itself — an instantaneous event connected to the fundamental level of reality, as suggested by Penrose — is a conscious moment. A sequence of such moments gives our stream of consciousness.

Quantum computation differs fundamentally from classical computation, utilizing quantum super-positions of information bits (quantum bits, or qubits, e.g. both 1 AND 0) which communicate/interact by non-local entanglement, another strange quantum behaviour.

The mechanism of reduction (conversion from quantum to classical) which produces the solution to a quantum computation is a big question — the so-called collapse of the wave function. In technological quantum computers an external measurement will cause reduction. In an isolated system (e.g. the brain) the Penrose

Some say the universe is made of information



suggestion of self-collapse due to an objective threshold (objective reduction) is based on the idea that super-positions are separations/curvatures in underlying space-time geometry, that these separations are unstable and will reduce to one particular curvature/separation after a specific time t . The larger the separation/superposition, the faster it will self-collapse (and the more intense the experience).

SR: Is the concept of 'qualia' — defined as the properties of sensory experiences which are incommunicable and only accessible by direct experience — one which provides a fundamental challenge to the physicalist worldview? Is it time that we considered 'information' as something as 'real' as the physical world?

SH: I would say qualia are a challenge for physicalism, but physicalists tend to trivialise the nature of qualia. Australian philosopher Frank Jackson's famous 'knowledge argument' about Mary (the colorblind vision neuroscientist who knows everything about color vision but lacks the actual experience) frames the question well. I disagree with the physicalist answer which states that when Mary DOES gain color vision and appreciates qualia she has merely gained new information, or knowledge. I don't equate qualia with information; I think that approach is a bait and switch. Interestingly, quantum information is not really information (it's a misnomer, actual signaling cannot occur). Quantum information may confer qualia.

Some say the universe is made of information. David Chalmers' 'dual aspect theory' says that such information has both a physical aspect and an experiential (qualia) aspect. This is similar to what William James had said, and Bertrand Russell's neutral monism, in which an underlying entity gives rise to both physical and mental qualities.

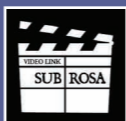
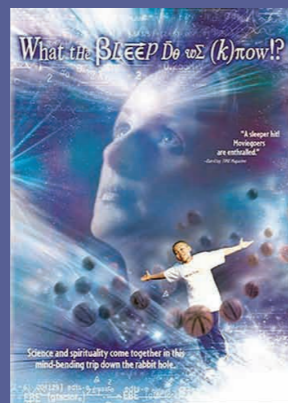
SR: In your opinion, does the hypothesis of 'quantum consciousness' provide a model for anomalous experiences such as Out of Body Experiences (OBEs) and Near Death Experiences (NDEs)?

SH: I would say possibly yes. Under normal circumstances consciousness occurs in the

DVD Consciousness

Interest in the mysteries of consciousness is rising rapidly, and nowhere is this more obvious in the fact that one of the most successful independent films of the past year was a documentary called *What the Bleep Do We Know!?* [URL](#)

In the film, fourteen top scientists and mystics — including Dr Stuart Hameroff — give their take on how new research into consciousness and quantum mechanics verges on the mystical.



[View trailer](#)

[Amazon US](#)



For those with a deeper interest, it's hard to go past a new release simply titled *Consciousness*. This monumental compilation offers six DVDs full of in-depth discussions with scientists on the cutting-edge of consciousness and paranormal research, including Dr Stuart Hameroff, Dr Dean Radin Ph.D., and David Chalmers Ph.D.



[Amazon US](#)



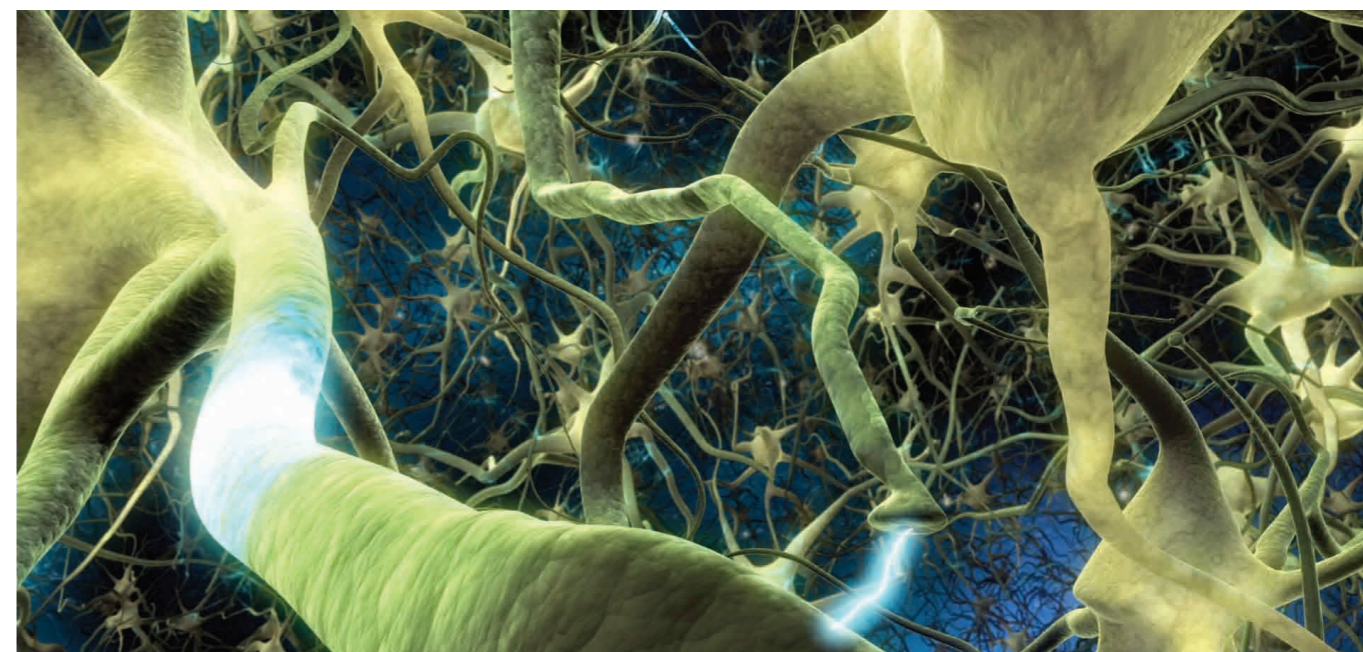
Artificial Intelligence is naked, haughty and pretentious when it comes to the question of consciousness

fundamental level of space-time geometry confined in the brain. But when the metabolism driving quantum coherence (in microtubules) is lost, the quantum information leaks out to the space-time geometry in the Universe at large. Being holographic and entangled it doesn't dissipate. Hence consciousness (or dream-like subconsciousness) can persist.

SR: In your review of Christof Koch's book *The Quest for Consciousness*, you say: "Consciousness occurs in dendrites, and the results are conveyed elsewhere by axonal spikes." What exactly are you referring to as 'consciousness' at the dendrite level? I have this view of consciousness as being the sum creation of many individual actions/reactions at the microscopic level. So are you referring to discrete conscious experiences (e.g. dendritic reaction to sensory input), or to some other 'action' which amounts to an individual's 'total' consciousness? Apologies for the confusing question.

SH: The conventional view is that the neural correlate of consciousness is in networks of neurons connected by chemical synapses — axons to dendrites — which are serial, though you can have parallel lines of serial connections. Axonal depolarisations, or spikes, are relatively easy to record, and are robust. Therefore the view is that spikes are the currency of consciousness. However the vast majority of actual processing occurs in dendrites (numerous dendrites per neuron). Electrophysiological correlates of consciousness (e.g. gamma EEG, coherent 40 Hz) are produced by dendrites, and dendrites are interconnected by gap junctions (forming what I call hyper-neurons) which actually DO account for gamma EEG/40 Hz. John Eccles and Karl Pribram have said that consciousness occurs in dendrites. I agree, though I think dendritic webs, or hyper-neurons are the actual site. A hyper-neuron may include tens or hundreds of thousands of gap junction-connected neurons. The quantum state may extend through the gap junctions so that quantum computations in the collection of microtubules within the many dendrites of a single hyper-neuron at a particular time mediate consciousness.

SR: How did you arrive at this idea of quantum consciousness in microtubules? Were you actively searching for an 'outside the paradigm' idea, or did you happen upon it by accident?



Brain chemistry as depicted in the film *What The Bleep Do We Know?* (photograph © whatthebleep.com)

I think psychedelic altered states are like consciousness except the boundary is pushed more into the quantum phase

SH: I was studying cell division in normal and cancer cells 30 years ago. I got intrigued by how the chromosomes were precisely separated by mitotic spindles — microtubules. I thought the microtubules must be processing information to account for the spatial precision. Then it was discovered that neurons were full of microtubules, so I assumed consciousness must extend downward into neuronal interiors to include microtubules.

But another layer of information processing was just more computation. Someone asked — “Say you are right. How would that explain qualia?” They were right. I couldn’t. Then I read Roger Penrose’s *The Emperor’s New Mind*, suggesting there must be quantum mechanisms at work in consciousness, specifically objective reduction. But he lacked a structure for his quantum computing by objective reduction in the brain. I thought microtubules might be the structure he needed for his quantum computing, and his objective reduction the mechanism I needed for microtubules. We hooked up and published our model in 1994/95. We’ve been attacked ever since but are still kicking, generating testable predictions which thus far have held true.

SR: Well, focusing on that for a second: as a scientist who works ‘outside’ the paradigm, do you encounter much ‘unfair’ resistance to your work? That is, some form of persecution (entirely separate to spirited and intelligent debate)?

SH: Persecution is a bit harsh, but yes, the conventional wisdom proponents are more interested in protecting their turf than honestly

considering alternatives. But it’s much better to be criticised than ignored. On the other hand skepticism is good (there are a lot of whacky ideas floating around — I just think ours is not one of them). But the skeptics should be as skeptical of the conventional dogma which is extremely weak. The title of Roger’s book *The Emperor’s New Mind*, aimed at artificial intelligence (or maybe specifically at Marvin Minsky), was the perfect example. Roger called their bluff. Artificial Intelligence is naked, haughty and pretentious when it comes to the question of consciousness.

SR: You (or your theory) recently came in for some criticism from *Scientific American’s* resident skeptic, Michael Shermer. In your reply to Shermer, you said: “Pre-conscious (unconscious/subconscious) information exists as quantum super-positions — multiple coexisting possible actions or experiences — which, upon reaching a specified threshold at the moment of consciousness/self-collapse, choose a particular action or experience.” This seems to border on the mystical, with reality basically being created by particular actions and choices. Do you feel that your research sometimes bridges a gap between science and religion (or perhaps more correctly, the ‘numinous’)?

SH: I’m not an idealist, like Bishop Berkeley or Hindu approaches, in which consciousness is all there is. Nor am I a Copenhagenist in which consciousness causes collapse (and chooses reality from a number of possibilities). But somewhere in between. Consciousness exists on the edge between the quantum and classical worlds.

I think more like a quantum Buddhist, in that there is a universal proto-conscious mind which we access, and can influence us. But it actually exists at the fundamental level of the universe, at the Planck scale.

SR: Seeing we’re heading for the religion end of things, what about the debate over the ‘consciousness’ of other organisms (e.g. paramecium, plants, fungi, dogs, dolphins etc). Is there some fundamental difference in cellular structure, or the microtubules, which might separate humans from all other organisms (at least in terms of a mechanism for conscious



experience)? Or are we all capable?

SH: Only in the brain are microtubules arranged so that a large number (e.g. in hyper-neurons) will be isolated in superposition to reach threshold in a reasonably short time. A paramecium might have a moment of consciousness every hour or so (though it would be difficult to maintain isolation for so long); we have 40 conscious moments per second.

SR: You talk about the action of anesthetics in selectively erasing consciousness. Do hallucinogenic substances also act at a similar level (though not necessarily erasing consciousness)?

SH: Consciousness exists on the boundary between the quantum subconscious and the classical world. I think hallucinogens promote the quantum state in their receptors (there is evidence to support that) and other proteins including microtubules. I think psychedelic altered states (and dreams) are like consciousness except the boundary is pushed more into the quantum phase — multiple coexisting possibilities, deep interconnections, distorted reality, sheaf logic, timelessness...and (for psychedelics) more conscious events per classical clock time, and more intense experience.

More information on Dr Stuart Hameroff and his research can be found at his Quantum Consciousness website. [🌐 URL](#)

Hackery/Quackery in *Scientific American*

An essay in the January 2005 issue of *Scientific American*, by professional skeptic Michael Shermer, criticised the surprise hit film *What the #\$*! Do We Know?*, and the scientific underpinnings of quantum consciousness, namely the Penrose-Hameroff model. Stuart Hameroff has written the following reply to Shermer’s column, which *Scientific American* has thus far failed to acknowledge. We have no such qualms:

I read with interest Michael Shermer’s skeptical criticism of the surprise hit film *What the #\$*! Do We Know?* (Whatthebleep? to its fans) in which I appear. The film attempts to link consciousness with the weirdness of quantum mechanics. As the best candidate for such a connection, Shermer cites (then attempts to refute) a theory put forth a decade ago by British physicist Sir Roger Penrose and me.

We attribute consciousness to quantum computation in structural proteins within the brain’s neurons called microtubules. Though Shermer correctly describes microtubules — part of the cell’s cytoskeleton — as scaffolding, they also actively organize intra-cellular movement,

*But What The Bleep?
is entertainment.
Lighten up!*

transport and neuronal synaptic plasticity (the apparent cornerstone of learning and memory). How are such activities organized? Pondering the amazing feats of unicellular protozoa which swim, avoid predators, learn, find food and mates and have sex — all without benefit of a single synapse — the famed neuroscientist Charles Sherrington surmised a half century ago “of nerve there is no trace, but the cytoskeleton might serve”. Indeed, cytoskeletal microtubules’

The prevalent paradigm force-fits consciousness into an illusory, out-of-the-loop epiphenomenon

periodic lattice structure (resembling switching circuits in computers) seems ideally suited to molecular-scale computation.

The states of microtubule protein subunits (bits in a microtubule computer) are regulated by quantum mechanical (van der Waals London) forces in intra-protein non-polar pockets, suggesting that microtubule subunits could act not only like classical bits, but also like quantum bits (qubits) in quantum computers.

To debunk our theory Shermer cites an assertion in a book by Victor Stenger that the product of mass, velocity and distance of a quantum system cannot exceed Planck's constant. I've not seen this proposal in a peer-reviewed journal, nor listed anywhere as a serious interpretation of quantum mechanics. But in any case Stenger's



assertion is disproven by Anton Zeilinger's experimental demonstration of quantum wave behavior in fullerenes and biological porphyrin proteins. (Skepticism should cut both ways, Mr. Shermer.) Nonetheless I agree with Stenger that synaptic chemical transmission between neurons is completely classical. The quantum computations we propose are isolated in microtubules within neurons. Classical neurotransmission provides inputs to, and outputs from, microtubule quantum computations mediating consciousness in neuronal dendrites.

But the brain seems far too warm for significant quantum states, apparently running into the problem of decoherence. (Shermer conflates the strong Copenhagen interpretation of the measurement problem — that conscious observation causes wave function collapse, with decoherence — in which any exchange of energy or information with the environment erodes a quantum system.) But recent evidence shows that quantum processes in biological molecules are actually enhanced at higher temperatures. Moreover biological mechanisms within neurons (actin gelation, laser-like metabolic pumping, plasma layer shielding and topological quantum error correction in/around microtubules) may preserve quantum states in microtubules for hundreds of milliseconds or longer at brain temperature.

Is there any evidence for the relevance of quantum states/processes to consciousness? Well, general anesthetic gases selectively erase consciousness while nonconscious brain activities continue (e.g. evoked potentials, control of autonomic function, EEG). The anesthetic gases act in the same intra-protein non-polar pockets in which quantum London forces control protein conformation. This occurs in a class of receptors, channels and other brain proteins including cytoskeletal structures. And the anesthetics do so by forming only quantum mechanical interactions, presumably interfering only with physiological quantum effects. It is logical to conclude that consciousness occurs in quantum pockets within proteins throughout the brain.

Shermer also conflates the Copenhagen interpretation with the dualist quantum mind proposal of Sir John Eccles. Suffice to say that in the Penrose-Hameroff model, consciousness does not cause collapse of the quantum wave

function (*a la* Copenhagen). Rather, consciousness is collapse. More precisely, consciousness is a particular type of self-collapse proposed by Penrose involving quantum gravity (currently being tested). Pre-conscious (unconscious/subconscious) information exists as quantum super-positions — multiple coexisting possible actions or experiences — which, upon reaching a specified threshold at the moment of consciousness/self-collapse, choose a particular action or experience. Such conscious moments are calculated to occur roughly 40 times per second.

Shermer closes by advising researchers to look for emergence of consciousness at the neural level and higher. This has been precisely the tack taken by armies of scientists and philosophers for decades, and the result is nil. Consciousness is ever more elusive. The prevalent paradigm — that axonal action potentials and chemical synaptic transmissions are fundamental units of computation from which consciousness emerges at a higher-order network level — force-fits consciousness into an illusory, out-of-the-loop epiphenomenon. While this might be true, the prevalent paradigm is also incompatible with the best electrophysiological correlate of consciousness — synchronized gamma EEG ("coherent 40 Hz" oscillations). The latter, it turns out, is mediated by coherent activities of neuronal dendrites linked by electrotonic gap junctions, windows which link adjacent neurons (and glia) into large-scale syncytia, or "hyper-neurons".

In 1998 I published a list of twenty testable predictions of our model (which, unlike prevalent emergence theories, is falsifiable). Several predictions have proven true (e.g. signaling and action of psychoactive drugs in microtubules). To explain the extension of quantum states among many neurons throughout the brain, I

Skeptics like Shermer should apply their craft to conventional dogma as well as to upstart hypotheses.



also predicted that neurons connected by gap junctions mediate consciousness, subsequently validated by gamma EEG studies. That doesn't prove that quantum states extend among neurons (e.g. by tunneling through gap junctions), but it casts serious doubt on conventional approaches (which have yet to generate a testable prediction). Skeptics like Shermer should apply their craft to conventional dogma as well as to upstart hypotheses.

Regarding the film, I stand by my statements (Shermer didn't criticize anything I said). But *What The Bleep?* is entertainment. Lighten up! The early animations of Jules Verne's moon landings were crude by later standards, but planted the seed of a wonderful idea in popular culture.

Stuart Hameroff M.D.
Professor, Departments of Anesthesiology and Psychology
Director, Center for Consciousness Studies
The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

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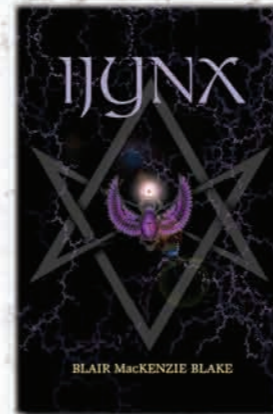


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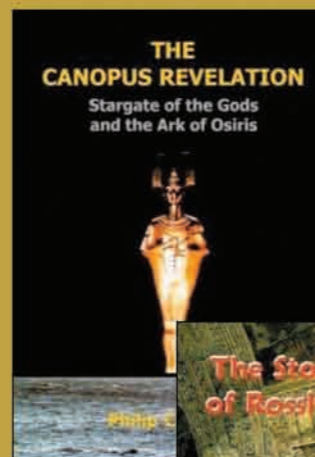


"Flaxen-robed priests enter the shadow swallowed tomb,
Pungent with the scent of sepulchral perfume,
To murmur spells from the Book of the Dead
In the lamp-flickered chamber where litanies are read,
Its cold walls ornamented with palette and reed
In jeweled scenes of the soul's passage through the sunless realms between"

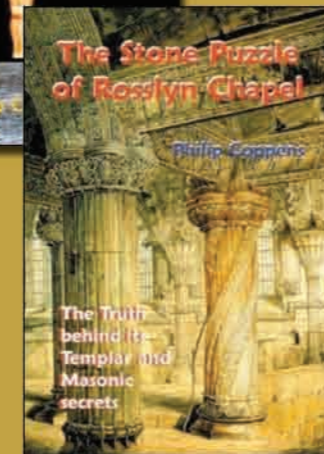
A collection of occult-influenced prose by Blair Mackenzie Blake

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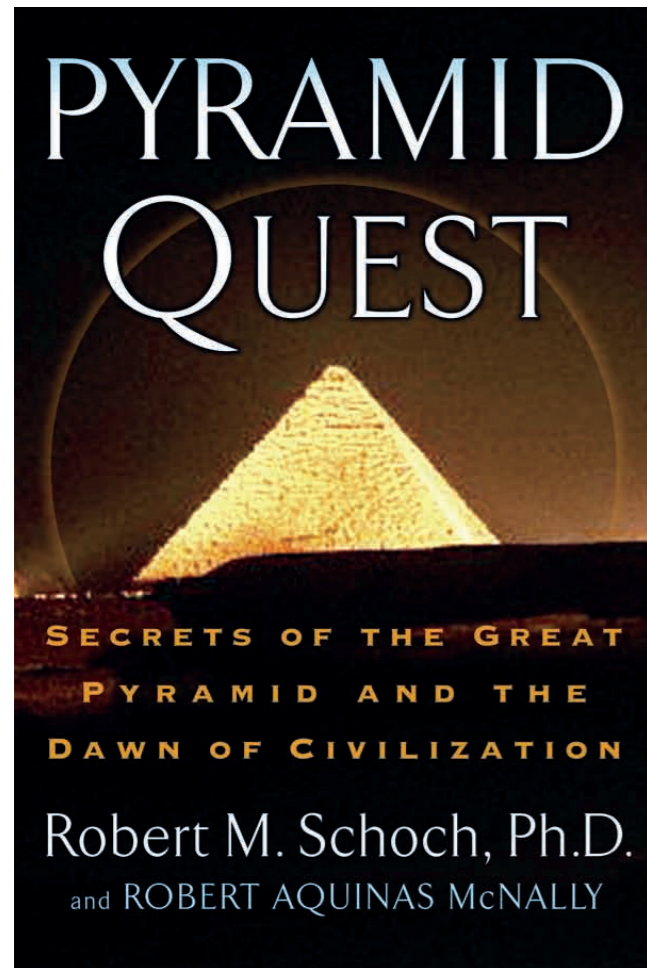
Philip Coppens has a 15 year track record of investigating the mysteries of the world - both ancient and modern. The author of *The Stone Puzzle of Rosslyn Chapel* and *The Canopus Revelation*, Coppens is also one of the leading investigators in the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau.



www.philipcoppens.com

Pyramid Quest:

Robert Schoch and Robert Aquinas McNally



The Giza Plateau has been on somewhat of a hiatus from the alternative archaeology scene in recent years, after being the focus of attention throughout the 1990s in the wake of the Hancock, Bauval and West triple-act. However, it looks set to return to the limelight in 2005 with the release of Robert Schoch's latest book, *Pyramid Quest* (co-authored with Robert Aquinas McNally). The blurb reads:

Pyramid Quest uses the rigorous intellectual analysis of scientific inquiry to investigate what we know about the Great Pyramid – and develops a stunning hypothesis: This ancient monument is the strongest

proof yet that civilization began thousands of years earlier than generally thought, extending far back into a little-known, almost-forgotten time.

The book begins with a recap of Schoch's introduction to the Giza Plateau, via John West and the age of the Sphinx controversy. This chapter illustrates the difficulty in catering to two audiences – one which is quite familiar with the story, and the newcomers who need an introduction. It serves its purpose well, moving along at a brisk pace while filling in the necessary blanks.

Schoch and McNally then move on to outlining the orthodox view of Egypt's early history, with a particular focus on the development of monumental building. This history includes interesting sidenotes, such as Schoch's personal opinion that the anomalous shape of the Bent Pyramid was a purposeful design from the outset, and the revelation that the Great Pyramid exhibits solar lighting effects during important seasonal events.

We are then treated (or is that subjected?) to a discussion of the various unorthodox theories concerning the Great Pyramid – from power plant to water pump, Cayce to Hoagland. Each is treated fairly – Schoch and McNally explore each idea with open-mindedness, but ultimately are skeptical on the basis of quite solid evidence.

This analysis provides one of the key learning experiences in the book – that throughout the ages, humanity has imposed their own meanings upon the Great Pyramid. This is summed up succinctly later in the book: "Working less with a microscope than a mirror, various thinkers, writers and philos-

This history includes interesting sidenotes, such as Schoch's personal opinion that the anomalous shape of the Bent Pyramid was a purposeful design from the outset

ophers have attached their ideas to Ancient Egypt and the pyramids."

Pyramid Quest agrees with the orthodox view of the construction capabilities of the Egyptian civilisation. Schoch provides evidence to show that it was well within their ability to build a monument even as grandiose as the Great Pyramid. He also squashes Sitchin's "Vyse Forgery" claim for the Khufu quarry marks, although he remains open-minded to the possibility that the 4th Dynasty Khufu may have been named after a more ancient personage:

It is apparent that building the Great Pyramid didn't require helicopters, levitation, extraterrestrial help, or divine intervention...but answering the question...does not necessarily mean it was done during the time of Khufu or even during the Old Kingdom.

This statement is the fulcrum upon which *Pyramid Quest* pivots – from an agreement with the orthodoxy and a dismissal of most alternative theories, the authors then present their own alternative case: that "Giza isn't the birth of something new...it is instead the full flower of something old." Relying heavily on the contentious geometric and astronomical analyses of Livio Stecchini and Thomas Brophy (respectively), Schoch and McNally go on to outline their hypothesis that Giza has astronomical and initiatory roots which reach back deep into pre-history.

While the ideas are fascinating and a worthy read, I do have my reservations. It would have been far more appealing if the book had skipped the chapters devoted to madcap pyramid theories, and instead provided far more detail on both Fred Wendorf's team's astronomical analysis of the truly ancient Nabta Playa site, as well as Colin Reader's excellent geological investigation into the pre-4th Dynasty attributes of the Giza Plateau. Both serve as serious support for the book's thesis. Brophy's claims, on the other hand, need to be published and debated properly before being given the absolute credence they are in *Pyramid Quest* (for example, the authors write – without batting an eyelid – that "the builders of the Great Pyramid were still keeping track of the galactic centre millennia later, and by means of the shafts emanating from the King's and Queen's Chamber").

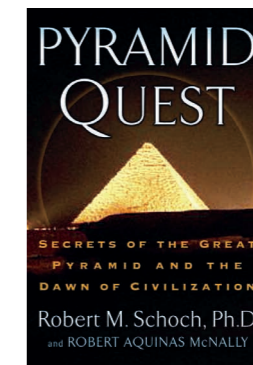
Also, where is Schoch? When he begins discuss-

ing his own geological opinion on pyramid structures, such as his dismissal of the geopolymer theory of how the Great Pyramid was built, it makes for fascinating and educational reading (as does his opinion of the Face on Mars). Instead, throughout much of the book he serves up other's opinions – a real lost opportunity in my eyes.

It also has to be asked: what happened to the thesis of *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*? This is certainly no sequel, as both the major threads of that book – diffusionism and catastrophism – are not addressed in *Pyramid Quest*, and the construction of the Great Pyramid is not linked to either of those ideas. It seems a strange follow-up, considering the interest generated within the alternative community by the previous book.

The (voluminous) appendices add to the value of the book, with numerous sub-threads of pyramid history, speculation and measurement available for the curious reader. One wonders how much could have been worked into the more logical progression of the book itself though, to help give more context and meaning to the quite diverse amount of material provided.

All in all, *Pyramid Quest* is written well and provides a good grounding in both the orthodox and alternative views of the Great Pyramid. Those new to the subject will find much of interest in the book (although they could also invest in *Giza: The Truth* by Ogilvie-Herald and Lawton, and *Secret Chamber* by Robert Bauval for a comprehensive overview of the history of Giza). However, I think more informed readers will be disappointed that the book does not go into more detail on the already-established evidence supporting alternative theories, and that Schoch himself doesn't play a more key role in this. This is the difference between *Pyramid Quest* being a 'popular read' on the subject, or one that will challenge the status quo in any way – and I feel that is a missed opportunity.



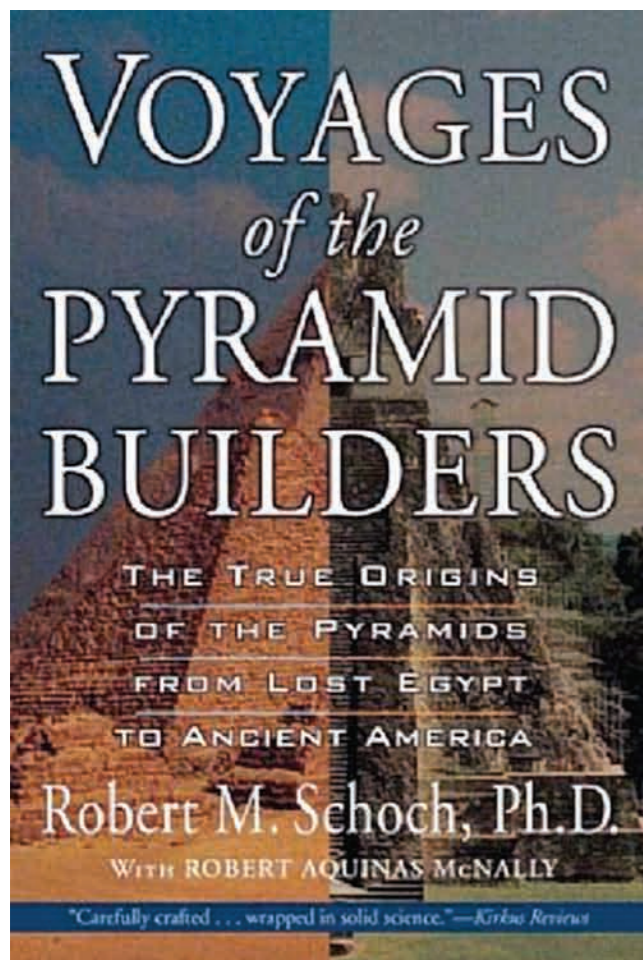
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Voyages of the Pyramid Builders

Robert Schoch and Robert Aquinas McNally

As an extension to our cover story on Robert Schoch and review of his latest book *Pyramid Quest*, we present here also the Daily Grail review of his 2003 book, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*



Robert Schoch must be a masochist. For more than a decade, Schoch has put his professional reputation on the line by bravely claiming that erosion on the Sphinx at Giza points to an earlier construction than officially recognised. For his intellectual curiosity, the Boston University geologist has been pilloried by orthodox academia - though in the intervening years no truly impartial investigation has been launched to settle the issue, despite

the extraordinary implications of his claims.

Not content to be the arch-enemy of Egyptologists, Schoch has now written a book titled *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, an investigation of 'pyramid cultures' around the world which examines whether they had a common source. It's like Schoch thought swimming with sharks wasn't exciting enough, so he decided to throw some blood in the water as well. Because behind the idea of a primary pyramid-building culture lies one of the dirtiest words in all of academic archaeology: hyper-diffusionism. And walking hand-in-hand with that word is another, even worse: Atlantis.

That's not to say that Schoch is talking Atlantis in this book. But the shadow of Ignatius Donnelly looms large whenever the subject of hyper-diffusionism is raised. In his massively influential *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, Donnelly put forth his thoughts on world-wide cultural similarities:

I cannot believe that the greatest inventions were duplicated spontaneously...in different countries.

Donnelly displayed immense erudition and depth of learning, but little in the way of critical thinking. His careless linkage of disparate themes was largely responsible for the massive amount of literature on the subject of Atlantis - most of it worthless. With it, hyper-diffusionism became a heretical word in academic circles, despite many fascinating pieces of evidence which still remain to argue against the isolationist view of ancient cultures.

Thankfully, it is on that evidence that Schoch has built his book. Much of the research presented is up-to-date, rather than the usual 'alterna-

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Pyramids at Giza, Egypt. (Photograph © Caroline Davies)

tive history' quotes from books that have been out of print for decades. *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* begins at Schoch's 'home base', the pyramid (and Sphinx) plateau at Giza in Egypt. From there, Schoch and his co-author Robert Aquinas McNally proceed to survey pyramid-building cultures through history and across the globe. Readers new to the subject, who may only be familiar with the Egyptian pyramids, will find this brief summary of great interest, considering the global spread of cultures mentioned.

In this section we also unfortunately find some of the weaker arguments in the book, and I can only assume critics will take delight in deconstructing some of it. For instance, Schoch includes structures such as Newgrange in Ireland as indicative of a pyramid-building culture...I'm afraid I find my own house looks more like a pyramid than Newgrange does. However, there are at least reasons given for the selection of Newgrange, and it should also be noted that Schoch includes it in a section titled 'Pyramids or Not?', indicating that this is more speculation than fact. Nevertheless, it leaves the rest of this fascinating book open to critical panning due to the seeming absurdity of this particular claim, at least at face value, for the casual reader.

The following chapter surveys the mythical foundations of pyramid building, and the strangely similar concepts across the globe. Schoch notes the astronomical component

via cardinal and stellar alignments, as well as the preservation of interred bodies via mummification. The practice of ritual sacrifice is also mentioned as a commonality between many pyramid constructions.

Chapters four to six then change tack away from the central subject of pyramids, and investigate the peopling of the New World. Chapter four presents the current anthropological data on the entrance of humans into the Americas, as well as introducing the idea that other contacts were made in the intervening years between the original migration and the arrival of Columbus. The subsequent two chapters then delve into the heretical idea of trans-oceanic influence in detail, the first discussing possible contacts across the Atlantic, and the second across the Pacific.

Readers are likely to find these two chapters extremely interesting. Schoch and McNally present up-to-date information on the latest research in a multitude of disciplines pointing at trans-oceanic contacts, including biological (e.g. intestinal parasites), archaeological (Old World-style copper tools) and anthropological (blow-pipes). Much of this will be new to most readers, and is perhaps the core of the book for the more experienced reader on diffusionism. My only caution might be one I've learnt from personal research - that diffusionism is not the only mechanism for cultural similarities and archetypes...others being areas such as astronomy and the Jung's speculative idea of a 'collective unconscious'. But most of the evidence cited here is rock solid, and surely challenges the current paradigm.

Interestingly, these chapters seem to pivot the book away from its apparent focus - the pyramid-building culture - and towards a more general summary of diffusionism and the cause for migrations. As mentioned above, there are three chapters which deal with journeys to the New World, which are followed by a chapter on how (transport and navigation) these people may have traveled, and then two chapters on catastrophism and the possibility that cometary impacts have had a major influence on the (relatively) recent history of *Homo sapiens*. To be sure, the idea of pyramids is linked into these threads, as Schoch sees them as possibly being built as a direct result of such impacts. However, from this point there seems to be no further concerted

In fact, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* is far more than a treatise on pyramid-building cultures - it is also an excellent summary of the current 'respectable' research into both diffusionism and catastrophism

effort to prove a link between cultures regarding the actual idea of pyramid-building.

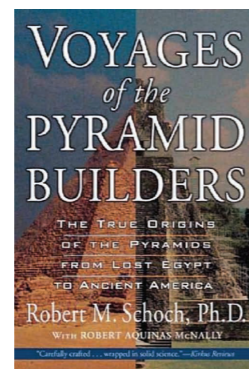
This is not a complaint. The chapters on diffusionism and catastrophism are engrossing. The review of cometary impact research is enlightening, and the link to Stephen Oppenheimer's research into the inundation of Sundaland (now Indonesia) is well made in light of the thesis of a primary pyramid-building culture. We might argue that the lack of a substantial amount of pyramids in the general location doesn't help such a hypothesis, but Oppenheimer's idea of a submerged civilisation - like that of Graham Hancock in *Underworld* - is still one of the more fascinating being pursued at the moment.

In fact, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* is far more than a treatise on pyramid-building cultures - it is also an excellent summary of the current 'respectable' research into both diffusionism and catastrophism. Although (necessarily) lacking in detail due to its broad survey, it provides an excellent up-to-date introduction to these areas of research and provides in-text references to the respective texts on each subject, for those who wish to learn more. I don't think Schoch and McNally prove the case for a central pyramid-building culture, although their thesis is worthy of reading (I guess the current title is far more readable than *Hyperdiffusionism and Cometary Impacts: The Evidence*). To do that, more attention must be given to linking building and

architectural techniques, and direct 'pyramidal' influences between cultures rather than simply broad evidence for cultural diffusion. Also, the link to Sundaland deserves far more attention, as without more evidence it is more a 'possible' than a 'probable'.

An added bonus to *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* is the inclusion of an essay titled "Redating the Great Sphinx of Giza" as an Appendix. Most readers will be familiar with, if not fans of, Schoch's work with John Anthony West in the 'redating the Sphinx' controversy. This essay brings the reader up to date with the latest arguments against Schoch's research, his reply / rebuttal to each of these, and also some corroborating research undertaken by others. Certainly a worthy read to finish the book.

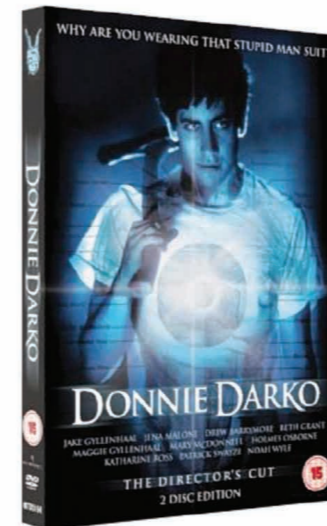
On a personal note, as a researcher I was disappointed at the lack of referencing (aside from the in-text nods of the head). No doubt that it aids in readability and the look of the book, but it would be nice to follow up some of the fascinating threads presented by Schoch and McNally in more detail. It would no doubt help in gaining more academic approval as well. But from the title to the layout, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* seems meant more as an easy and popular read on some of these fascinating and heretical ideas, and it certainly succeeds on that point. I found the book eminently readable (in contrast to many on these subjects), and much of the content absolutely fascinating. Considering the controversial nature of the topics discussed, and the factual minefield presented by books following the Donnelly tradition, *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders* ranks right up there in terms of both presentation and research. Here's hoping that we hear more on this subject from Schoch and McNally.



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Donnie Darko: Director's Cut DVD



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Donnie Darko was never going to be a massive blockbuster. Instead, like forerunners such as *Pi*, this was a movie on esoteric subject matter destined for a 'cult' - or perhaps more honestly, 'intelligent' - audience. Despite a plot begging for a special-effects bonanza, including jet crashes, extra dimensions and time travel, director Richard Kelly worked the story-line and characters with maturity beyond his twenty-something years. He (and the movie's financiers) may have wondered at the fiscal wisdom of plotting such a course when the movie bombed at the box office. But *Donnie Darko* came back from the dead as a DVD success - so much so that we now have a Director's Cut DVD of this enigmatic movie.

For those yet to be introduced to the Darko world, the movie follows a strange sequence of events which begin with Donnie Darko (Jake Gyllenhaal) encountering a man-sized rabbit named Frank, who tells him how much time is left until the world will end - and it's not long. Is Frank a figment of Donnie's troubled imagination, is he a spirit guide, or something else altogether? These are the questions which you will be asking yourself even after you walk away from this movie. To describe much more of the plot would be to spoil the experience - it's a worthwhile (if confusing) journey to take with a fresh brain, ripe for warping.

This new Director's Cut does offer some further explanation via the inclusion of formerly deleted scenes. Kelly also offers the viewer some excerpts from the book that Donnie finds in the film - *The*

Philosophy of Time Travel - which give handy clues as to what is happening as the movie progresses. Nevertheless, you'll still probably need multiple viewings, or a trip to the movie's official website, to help fill in the majority of the blanks (though some will remain).

Also included is the ubiquitous commentary from Richard Kelly and good friend Kevin Smith (*Clerks*). It's always great to hear the director commenting on the movie (so often left to an actor or producer), to really get a feel for the production of the movie and how their particular vision evolved. And the vision shown by Kelly on *Donnie Darko* is superb, from a beautifully sequenced introduction to the main characters at the school, to Donnie's menacing interludes with Frank the bunny.

The Director's Cut also changes some of the backing soundtrack, which can be a little off-putting for the serious Darko fan as the musical selection of 1980s music was crucial to the vibe of the movie. The original version of the movie featured the opening audio of "Killing Moon" by Echo & The Bunnymen, which set the tone for the movie perfectly (to my ears anyhow). However, in the Director's Cut Kelly has replaced this track with "Never Tear Us Apart" by INXS. Thankfully, Gary Jules rendition of "Mad World" remains with its visual collage as in the original release, as this is probably one of the most exquisite audio-visual combinations I've had the pleasure to experience in a movie.

A second DVD features a production diary, with B-roll footage of the movie-making process and an optional commentary as well. A storyboard to screen featurette also gives a good insight into how the original vision translated to the screen. Documentaries on the *Donnie Darko* fan base included on this disk were not as appealing to me, although there are a few laughs to be had via "#1 fan" Darryl Donaldson's piece (don't be fooled folks!).

There's little to dislike about the new package, and for the serious collector of movies the Director's Cut always offers a little more prestige than the original - although in this case original fans might like to stick with the original experience. As a fan of the movie myself, it's a welcome addition to my collection. I'm always up for a bit of brain-bending though, so disregard my review if you like your movie experience to be simple and sugary. However, for the discerning movie viewer with esoteric leanings, this is a great purchase.

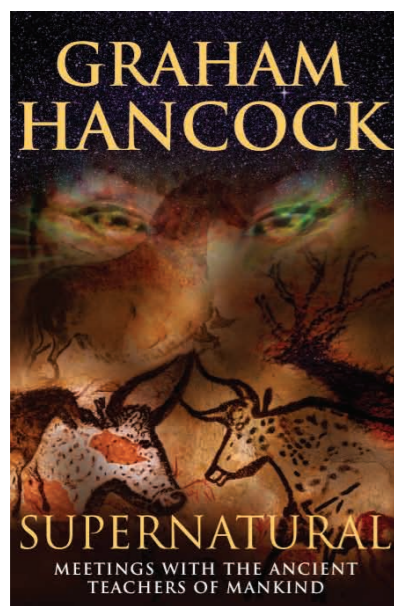


Book: *Supernatural*
 Author: Graham Hancock
 Release: October 6, 2005

Best-selling 'alternative' author Graham Hancock (*Fingerprints of the Gods*) is set to release his much-awaited next book later this year. Titled *Supernatural*, the new tome is said to investigate the "greatest riddle of human history" – the sudden development, some 50,000 years ago, of the qualities which make us human, such as religion, sophisticated symbolism, and innovative thinking.

Hancock's quest takes him on a journey of adventure and detection from the stunningly beautiful painted caves of prehistoric France, Spain and Italy to remote rock shelters in the mountains of South Africa where he finds a treasure trove of extraordinary Stone Age art.

The clues lead him to travel to the depths of the Amazon rainforest to drink the powerful plant hallucinogen Ayahuasca with Indian shamans, whose paintings contain images of 'supernatural



beings' identical to the animal-human hybrids depicted in prehistoric caves and rock shelters. And Western laboratory volunteers placed experimentally under the influence of hallucinogens such as mescaline also report visionary encounters with exactly the same beings. Scientists at the cutting edge of consciousness research have begun to consider the possibility that such hallucinations may be real perceptions of other 'dimensions'.

Could the 'supernaturals' first depicted in the painted caves and rock shelters be the ancient teachers of mankind? Could it be that human evolution is not just the 'blind', 'meaningless' process that Darwin identified, but something else, more purposive and intelligent, that we have barely even begun to understand?

Movie: *War of the Worlds*
 Director: Steven Spielberg
 Release: June 29, 2005

Steven Spielberg returns to one of his favourite subjects with the upcoming *War of the Worlds*. Spielberg, the director of *E.T.* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, says that while his inner self prefers movies about benevolent aliens, "the audience in me wants to make *War of the Worlds*. For sheer excitement, nothing comes close to warfare between the human race and an extraterrestrial one. It's bigger than life."

The movie, which took only 10 months to make (and just 72 days to shoot), stars Tom Cruise and will open on June 29. Likely to be the summer blockbuster, the movie is the third major adaptation of the 1898 H. G. Wells novel – the others being Orson Welles' infamous radio broadcast in 1938, and the 1953 film produced by George Pal.

War of the Worlds web site  URL

T O M C R U I S E

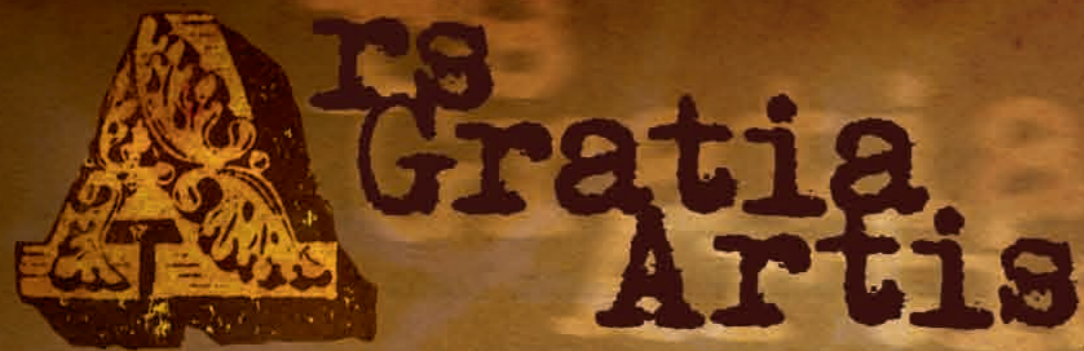


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WarOfTheWorlds.com SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON DECCA

JUNE 29



Spiral Path

by Cernig

I have been a student of the mystics,
And a miller by a stream.
I have delved in the bones of Mother Earth,
And tended goats on hillsides.
I have been poor more often than not,
And happy, by and by.
I will flow into the sea one day,
Yet still I have my source.

My home is Caledon of old,
Beyond the wall of turf and tree,
Raised in folly by a Latin hand.
What need for temples and icons of gold?
We have the hills and sheltered glens,
The crags whose weathered faces,
Have glowered in the mists,
Ere your paltry lands rose from the waves.

I have been an otter playing in a burn,
And a kestrel on the wing.
I have been a wolf howling to the gale,
And a hermit in a hidden cave.
I have sang the song more often than not,
And died, by and by.
I will flow into the sea one day,
Yet still I sing my source.

My home is a hut of wood and thatch:
You might sneer at this hovel,
But you would not dare.
My wife, of royal blood and true,
Would slit you ear to ear,
Before you finished.
We value manners highly here.
Care not a whit for snide politeness.

I have been a single leaf,
On a mighty rowan tree.
I have been a single stalk of wheat,
And the scythe which cut it down.
I have known my name more often than not,
And cried, by and by.
I will flow into the sea one day,
Remembering my source.

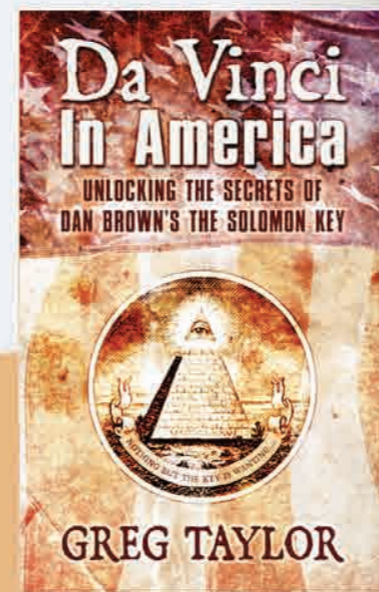
We are a gracious people,
Who save our insults for battle,
Or for true friends over ale.
Cross us at your peril,
As the ghosts of old invaders will tell.
The day they sent the Legion North,
Was a time for singing songs,
And whetting blades.

I have been a mist upon the mountains,
And a winter wind through trees.
I have been a snowflake on the hearthstone,
And the sunlight on a window pane.
I have loved more often than not,
And lost love, by and by.
I will flow into the sea one day,
A long journey from my source.

I have been a sword that broke in battle,
And a child born a King.
I have been a single word,
And the thief who took your gold away.
I have learned more often than not,
And tried, by and by.
I will flow into the sea one day,
To join, at last, my source.

What's in Dan Brown's next book?

"Greg Taylor...is the up-and-coming author in this field and what he has to say makes fascinating reading"
- Graham Hancock



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