

The Daily Grail *Presents*

# SUB ROSA

Where Science And Magic, Myth And History Meet



Issue Three - December 2005

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This issue's cover feature is on visionary artist Alex Grey; not only one of the foremost artists of our time, but also an eloquent and articulate speaker on the subjects of art, mysticism and society in general.



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## December 2005

It's December already, what a year! Personally, it's flown by – self-publishing and promoting my book *The Guide to Dan Brown's The Solomon Key* (and then signing up for a 'real' publishing deal), launching *Sub Rosa*, continuing the daily updates to our news site "The Daily Grail" ([www.dailygrail.com](http://www.dailygrail.com)) and also adding new web resources such as our wiki "The Red Pill" ([redpill.dailygrail.com](http://redpill.dailygrail.com)) and our 'raw feed' alternative to the Grail, "The Underground Stream of Consciousness" ([stream.dailygrail.com](http://stream.dailygrail.com)). All this while having two small children to love and care for!

Why so busy? Simply put, because researching and publishing on these subjects is what I live for. The various resources we've created, which I mentioned above, allow us now to focus on presenting alternative topics in a number of formats, from daily news briefs, beautiful magazine presentations and published books, to user-submitted and managed news and information via 'the Stream' and 'The Red Pill'.

On the downside to such immersion in the field, is the problem of earning a living and supporting my family. I am not a commercially minded person, and hate the idea of 'selling out'. However, hopefully we are setting up a structure which allows us to continue working on these topics. On "The Daily Grail", we now have Google Ads, which are (usually!) topical advertisements based on the keywords found on the website. From what we've seen so far, many readers find these a helpful addition, with solid click-through rates on a regular basis. Here in *Sub Rosa*, we have a growing number of advertisers who – once again – provide topical ads which I'm sure many readers are very interested in. The support of these advertisers is what allows us to keep churning out issues, so please support them in return if you find their ad interesting!

Beyond that, we also now accept donations to help support the magazine, with a view to eventually getting it into print. If you're not in a financial position to offer a donation, why not help out in some other way – for example, passing on the web link to your friends or online communities,

or even printing out a few flyers and distributing them? The great resource we have is our community – if everyone did just a little bit, the results would be massive. In order to ascertain whether going to print would be a worthwhile option, please visit the Daily Grail ([www.dailygrail.com](http://www.dailygrail.com)) and vote in the poll we have there.

Also, from Issue 4 we will have a 'letters' section (more correctly, email), so if you have any feedback or comments to make, please email us via [subrosa@dailygrail.com](mailto:subrosa@dailygrail.com). We also welcome any submissions of book, music or DVD reviews – we can't pay, but we will certainly credit you.

Enough with the small talk – we've got another huge issue packed full of content waiting for you, so dive right in (after you go vote in the poll of course!) . . .

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## Harvard Psychologist Debunks Abductions

"Nobody is being abducted by aliens"

Susan Clancy, a postdoctoral fellow in psychology at Harvard University, has attempted to disprove alien abductions as nothing but hallucinations and products of sleep paralysis in a new book, *Abducted: How People Come To Believe They Were Kidnapped By Aliens*.

Clancy believes alien abductees develop false memories of traumatic events. "As far as science knows, nobody is being abducted by aliens," she stressed. "One of the most bitter and volatile debates ever to occur in psychology concerns the reality of repressed and recovered memories of traumatic events."

Clancy arrived at Harvard in 1996, and started her research on false memories by studying victims of sexual abuse. Her work was controversial, and she was accused of trying to discredit victims and help the offenders.

It was about this time that the Harvard Medical School began investigating the research methods of Pulitzer Prize-winning psychiatrist John Mack, who studied the alien abduction phenomenon extensively. Along with her advisor, Harvard psychologist Richard McNally, Clancy decided to disprove the methods of Mack, and demonstrate that alien abduction stories were figments of the imagination.

Placing an ad in the local paper asking for alien abductees, Clancy received hundreds of enquiries, the majority from journalists wondering what the story was. She selected 50 potential abductees. Clancy says that the people who recovered memories of alien abductions were seldom psychologically impaired. "They're normal, very nice people with no overt psychopathology."

Clancy thinks many abductees developed

their beliefs of alien abduction because of sleep paralysis, a harmless but nonetheless frightening desynchronization of sleep cycles. "You wake up from REM sleep but you still feel the paralysis that normally accompanies REM sleep," said Clancy.

She also writes that alien abductions are imagined by fantasy-prone day-dreamers. "There's this widely shared cultural script that helps explain these frightening sleep paralysis experiences," she said. "I think these recovered memories are actually distorted memories of things they had read about or seen . . . [they] began only after they were featured on TV and in the movies. Abduction accounts did not exist prior to 1962."

Will Bueche is an abductee who worked with Harvard psychiatrist Dr John Mack, who became convinced of a 'reality' underlying the abduction experience. Bueche says Clancy's theories cannot fully explain what he's experienced. "I think her book comes close to the truth in many ways, but it isn't able to see the potential out there for another breakthrough in how we see reality," he said.

David Jacobs, an associate professor of history at Temple University, who teaches a class called UFOs and American Society, thinks Clancy's work is a typical debunking book.

"This is junk social science, and there is a certain condescending quality to it," he said. "All debunkers make one or more of the following mistakes: They ignore the data, they distort the data or they don't know the data."

After receiving hate-mail and an angry backlash from believers, Susan Clancy says she is finished with studying the alien abduction phenomenon.

"All you can do is argue that they're improbable and that the evidence adduced by the believer is insufficient to justify the belief," she wrote. "Ultimately, then, the existence of ETs is a matter of opinion, and the believers have their own opinions, based on firsthand experience."

## New Mexico Circles Explained

Symbols point to Scientology bunker

Giant symbols have been found carved in the New Mexico landscape. Resembling the patterns etched into the Nazca plains of Peru, they have had some speculating about crop circles of extraterrestrial origin.

The truth is a lot stranger. The landscape symbols make up the logo of the Church of Scientology, and are aerial signposts marking an underground complex, including a vault built into a mountainside protecting the works of the Church's founder, the late science-fiction author L. Ron Hubbard.

The Church has acknowledged that an underground archive of Hubbard's works exists, which includes stainless steel tablets engraved with Hubbard's writing, encased in heat-resistant titanium capsules and playable on

a solar-powered turntable. It was constructed in the late 1980s at a cost of US\$2.5million.

According to former Church of Scientology members, the logo is a signpost for Church members traveling from the future and other parts of the universe.

Bruce Hines is a former member of the Church of Scientology, and says the report sounds correct: "The fact that they would etch this into the desert to be seen from space, it fits into the whole ideology."

Chuck Beatty, another former member, says there are two other underground vaults in California, designed to withstand nuclear war and remain intact for future generations, and reincarnated current members, to rediscover.

(Source: [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com))

## Radar Reveals Martian Ice

Water may be trapped in underground cavity

A radar antenna aboard Europe's Mars Express spacecraft has probed two kilometers below the surface of Mars and found the best evidence so far of liquid water deep underground.

Scientists believe an impact crater lies between 1.5 and 2.5 kilometres below the surface of the Chryse Planitia area of Mars, buried beneath volcanic ash or soil several billion years ago. The crater's location is in a basin where ancient rivers once flowed. "If the water could be captured in a ba-

sin and preserved for several billion years, it may still be there," says MARSIS co-leader Jeff Plaut of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, US.

The signal reflected from the bottom of the crater is so strong and appears so flat that it may be liquid water. "If you put water there, that's what the signal might look like," says William T K Johnson, MARSIS manager at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, US.

(Source: [news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk))

## News Briefs

Studies of Antarctic ice cores have revealed that levels of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere are now 27 percent higher than they've been at any point in the past 650,000 years.

Light-sensitive bacteria has been developed as a unique kind of photographic film. Taking 4 hours to form a picture in red light only, it has extremely high resolution – 100 megapixels per square inch!

An African-British man refused to give a blood sample after police pulled him over for erratic driving, claiming that as a witch-doctor, it would turn him into a zombie. He was cleared of drink-driving, but lost his license for 18-months for refusing to give a sample.

An Australian hunter's claim of shooting dead a panther in the Gippsland bush has been dismissed after DNA tests revealed the animal is an ordinary feral domestic cat.

Seven stones sacred to the Native Americans of New Mexico are to be relocated due to the construction of a new road. Decorated with petroglyphs, it's believed the stones will lose their significance and connection to the sacred Earth, despite the attention and care given to their relocation.

## Pyramid Found in Europe?

A Bosnian explorer claims to have located a buried pyramid in the heart of Europe, in his Balkan homeland. Semir Osmanagic, who has spent the last 15 years studying the pyramids of Central and South America, has been drawn to a pyramid-like hill overlooking the central Bosnian town of Visoko.

“It has all the elements: four perfectly shaped slopes pointing toward the cardinal points, a flat top and an entrance complex,” he said. “We have already dug out stone blocks which I believe are covering the pyramid. We found a paved entrance plateau and discovered underground tunnels. You don’t have to be an expert to realize what this is.”

Osmanagic calls the new dis-



covery “the Bosnian pyramid of the sun”, a reference to the famous pyramid at Teotihuacan, Mexico. The hill is precisely aligned to the cardinal directions, and stands some 70 meters (230 feet) high. Osmanagic believes the hill was shaped by the Illyrian people, who inhabited the Balkan peninsula long before Slavic tribes conquered it around AD 600.

(Source: [news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk))

## Cloning Pioneer Quits

Hwang Woo-Suk, South Korea’s pioneer of cloning technology, has resigned from his official position during landmark research to grow human embryonic stem cells from a cloned embryo, after admitting to ethical and scientific problems with his research.

The respected scientist admitted that junior members of the research team donated their own eggs, and that other women were paid by members of his team to supply eggs – both without his knowledge. The donation of eggs carries a small risk of contaminating the research results, and ethical rules forbid junior members

of teams doing so, to avoid the possibility of coercion.

“I feel so sorry to speak about such shameful and miserable things to you people,” Hwang Woo-Suk told a press conference. “I again sincerely apologise for having caused concern at home and abroad.”

He maintains that when two researchers offered their eggs, he refused to use them. However, the junior researchers donated their eggs under false names in 2003. Hwang says he later found out the truth but lied about it because the women asked him to do so to protect their privacy.

(Source: [www.newscientist.com](http://www.newscientist.com))

## News Briefs

An international effort to investigate the nature of dark energy has determined that the mysterious force has remained constant over the life of the universe, rather than fading away as some hypotheses suggest.

Scientists monitoring earth movements in Antarctica have discovered icebergs sing. Sound waves at a frequency of 0.5 hertz are too low for human ears, but playing them at a higher speed causes the icebergs to sound like a swarm of bees or an orchestra warming up.

In July 2005 a small primate skull was discovered in the desert of Tafilalet, near Morocco. Named *Homo alaouite*, it has since been claimed the skull could be as old as 360-million-years.

Star Anise, an obscure licorice-flavoured spice used in Chinese cuisine, may be the new weapon against Bird Flu. Star Anise is the primary source of shikimic acid used to produce oseltamivir phosphate, better known as the brand-name Tamiflu.

*National Enquirer* journalist and ufologist Robert Pratt passed away on November 25th, aged 79. Pratt was author of the book *Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO Sightings*.

## Bimini Discovery Proved Right?

An American archaeological team led by William Donato and organised by Dr Greg Little has confirmed limestone artifacts submerged in shallow water 50 meters off the Miami coast are the remains of an ancient harbour.

In May 2005 the team investigated a mile-long formation of stones, initially from the air, and later through dives. Large blocks of limestone arranged in circular patterns were found, spaced at regular intervals. "These finds took us by surprise," stated Dr. Greg Little. "The circles may be similar to ancient Mediterranean harbour mooring circles."

A mile from this site is the controversial Bimini Road, a J-shaped underwater formation of stone blocks, declared by many skeptics to be a hoax. Two stone anchors were also found in the 1800-foot-long Bimini Road, including several other artifacts.

"One of these is identical to unusual ancient Greek anchors found at Thera," Little related. "But the most important finds directly con-

tradict skeptical claims."

Numerous multiple tiers of blocks were discovered, including one set of three on top of each other. However Dr Little said the most definitive evidence was found under the massive blocks. "We found rectangular slabs of smooth, cut stone literally stacked under several blocks. These were used as leveling prop stones. This is proof that the so-called Bimini Road was a breakwater forming an ancient harbour."

"While the finds are definitive," says Little, "the real problem is that a few skeptics wrote articles asserting the main formation was simply natural limestone. A hoax was perpetrated at Bimini by the skeptics, but you have to examine a 1978 report to understand it. Academic archaeologists and geologists don't read that report. They cite later summaries, which are based on falsified data. The hoax is a disgrace, but it's been actively supported by key people."

(Source: I-Newswire.com)

## New Stonehenge Discovery

A team of archaeologists from Sheffield University have revealed significant new insights into the role of Stonehenge after discovering a prehistoric ceremonial road.

The new discovery proves there was a walkway between a henge (a circular monument) at Durrington Walls, and the River Avon, three miles away, blowing a hole in the theory the stand-

ing stones at Stonehenge were a one-off feature.

The new find supports the team's theory that Stonehenge was in fact just one part of a much larger complex of stone and timber circles linked by ceremonial avenues to the river, and that its primary role was as a funerary monument.

(Source: www.uforeview.net)

## News Briefs

Ancient stone tools found at a site overlooking the Mojave River Valley may be as old as 135,000 years, casting doubt on the Bering Strait migration theory.

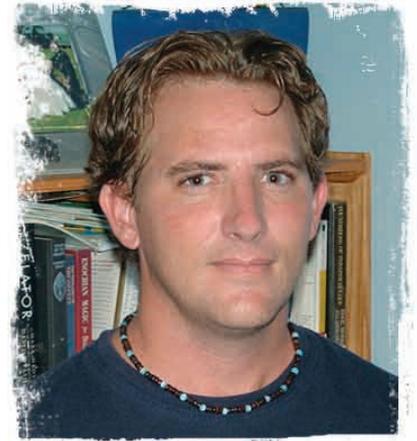
Richard Carrigan, a particle physicist at the US Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in Illinois, believes scientists searching space for signals from extraterrestrial civilizations are putting Earth's security at risk, by distributing the jumble of signals they receive to computers all over the world.

Ancient anchors made from acacia wood used for Roman ships have been found on the receding shores of the Dead Sea, preserved by natural salt for more than 2000 years.

The Japanese Hayabusa probe successfully landed on the Itokawa asteroid 290 million kilometers from Earth and became the first ever to take samples, but it has now been hit by more technical trouble, and the mission may end in failure.

Scientists at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and collaborating institutions claim that global ocean levels are rising twice as fast today as they were 150 years ago, and global warming caused by human activities is to blame.

# The Afterlife Aftermath



In this issue of *Sub Rosa*, a number of columns and articles take a look at the scientific evidence for the survival of consciousness after death. Though hardly a ‘boom industry’, there is certainly a growing amount of evidence and research programs which are offering support to the hypothesis – from the reincarnation research of Dr Ian Stevenson, to the Near-Death Experience testing being done by Peter Fenwick, Sam Parnia, and others.

One of the more controversial areas of research has been the ‘afterlife experiments’ conducted by Dr Gary Schwartz at the University of Arizona. Under controlled laboratory conditions, Schwartz tested high-profile mediums to see if they were able to make contact with ‘the beyond’ and ascertain private details of selected ‘sitters’. His conclusion, astoundingly, was that they could.

Soon after, Schwartz published a book, titled *The Afterlife Experiments*, which described the history and thinking behind this set of tests. Needless to say, high-profile media skeptics/cynics such as James Randi were not impressed. Indeed, what followed was a series of vicious attacks from Randi via his weekly Internet newsletter for the James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF). He labelled Schwartz a believer in the Tooth Fairy, a self-promoter who had been “deceived by clever performers,

but that he himself fell into his errors carelessly, willingly, and eagerly.”

The acrimonious ‘debate’ between Dr Schwartz and James Randi has continued over a number of years, with both sides accusing the other of underhandedness and of spreading untruths. Enough, certainly, on the part of James Randi to keep a cloud hanging over Dr Schwartz’s results, once again marginalizing any possible debate on the question of whether these mediums really do have the ability to ‘talk to the dead’.

Surely this is an important question, and we would all be served by a far more comprehensive discussion on the merits of the research. It is hard to fault Dr Schwartz, as his replies to Randi’s accusations have been well thought out, calm responses on a point-by-point basis. But sadly, all Randi has to do is publicly rebuke the research and the debate is automatically stifled.

Unfortunately this is now a situation likely to deteriorate, rather than improve, after a surprising statement appeared recently on the website of the medium *du jour*, Allison Dubois. Dubois, who has a hit television series based on her life (*Medium*, starring Patricia Arquette), has taken offence at a new book by Dr Schwartz which focuses on his lab work with her (titled *The Truth About Medium*). Dubois – whom Dr Schwartz has previously dubbed a ‘Michael Jordan’ of psychics – has disavowed any endorsement or con-

One of the more controversial areas of research has been the ‘afterlife experiments’ conducted by Dr Gary Schwartz at the University of Arizona

nection to the new book:

*I was warned that when you become a public figure that people will come out of the woodwork to profit from you. Well I guess I'm no exception. One person who has been included on shows with me that I do not endorse is Dr. Gary Schwartz. I was disappointed to find out that the four years that I spent in the lab for "science" are, in my view, being misused by Dr. Schwartz – even after I expressed my disapproval . . .*

*. . . Participating in lab studies with Dr. Schwartz was never to be a for-profit venture. I always understood that we were participating in scientific studies to help us and the world gain a better understanding of our abilities...I was promised complete confidentiality and anonymity in how Dr. Schwartz and the University would report the results of these studies.*

*. . . What I do is not a carnival sideshow attraction, nor a morning tea leaf reading. So please don't confuse other people's attempts to profit from the gifts of mediums like myself . . . as having our endorsement. (from <http://www.alisondubois.com/news.html>)  URL*

This statement will surely be grist to the mill for skeptics such as Randi, enabling them to throw further doubts over Schwartz's trustworthiness by labelling him a profiteer, and likely sounding a virtual death knell for any acceptance of the 'afterlife experiments'.

Should Dubois have made a public statement, considering the difficulties already facing afterlife research in establishing credibility? On the one hand, it's difficult to fault her – after all, if mediums are seeking credibility then one would expect to hear the truth from them, no matter even if they are attacking one of their greatest supporters. Additionally, if she was promised complete confidentiality, then she has every right to complain about being the focus of the new book. Alternatively, some might question Dubois' claim of not being a 'carnival sideshow', considering she seems very happy to have a television series based on her life? A recent response to her claims by Dr Schwartz (see <http://veritas.arizona.edu/TRUTH>)  URL has also thrown further doubts over her account.

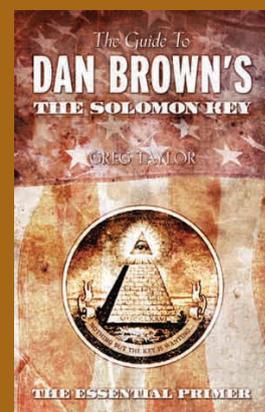
Perhaps before going public some greater

effort should have been made to resolve the dispute? Dr Schwartz's research is probably the only thing which currently gives mediums any scientific respectability, so publicly rebuking the author of those experiments is not going to help with credibility – either the researcher can't be trusted, or his top medium can't be trusted. Anybody interested in research into 'fringe' topics knows the delicate line being walked between honest exploration, and the minefield of public perception . . . a few negative sentences can provide enough ammunition to destroy the good work of months of meticulous research. Randi must be a very happy man at the moment . . .

## 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. *The Guide To The Solomon Key* is a guidebook to the esoteric history and locations likely to be included in Dan Brown's next book, *The Solomon Key*.



Find out more . . .

<http://solomon.dailygrail.com>  URL

# Putting Psychedelics Into Perspective



Back in January an episode from a BBC2 series called “Tribe” documented anthropologist Bruce Parry’s initiation into the shamanic Babongo tribe of Gabon, a process which required him to ingest a considerable quantity of a paste made from the roots of the plant tabernanthe iboga. He explained that an early part of the experience involved him being transported back in time to specific situations in which he had caused hurt or offence to others, and vividly reliving them by swapping places and thereby becoming acutely aware of the effects of his actions. You can imagine how fascinated I was by this revelation. Here was Parry describing exactly the same “life-review” experience as that of near-death and interlife regression subjects – which is a key element of rational spirituality that I describe elsewhere in this issue – right down to the “role-swapping” element.

Further research revealed that this is a universally recognised aspect of taking iboga or its synthesised derivative ibogaine that is nevertheless unique to this psychedelic – which is why it holds out such promise from a spiritual and therapeutic perspective. And it was in this context that I agreed to give a talk about psychedelics at a major conference in London at the beginning of November. But it was only a few weeks beforehand that I was able to give this my full attention, and this coincided with the launch of Graham Hancock’s new book, *Supernatural* – one of the side effects being re-

newed interest in the research of Rick Strassman. So I sat down to read *DMT: The Spirit Molecule* with high hopes.

Unfortunately by the end these hopes had been somewhat dashed, and I wondered if I had been reading the same book as everyone else. Because far from being the spiritual panacea that Strassman had hoped, it appears that the psychedelic doses of intravenous DMT he administered to sixty patients in his study fell well short of his expectations. Only three of them had “transpersonal” experiences – although none of these contained any significant spiritual insights

– and in his follow-up none of his sixty subjects seemed to have had a sufficiently dramatic experience, whatever their feelings at the time, that it benefited them in any long-term or conclusively spiritual way. Of course, this is in stark contrast to the results of taking iboga – and of having near-death or interlife experiences. In fact the majority of Strassman’s subjects

Strassman’s  
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or “elves”,

encountered nonterrestrial realms populated either by “aliens” or “elves”, which are so typical of western, non-shamanic psychedelica. So, despite their apparently non-transcendent nature, did these experiences at least have some objective validity – or were they largely subjective projections?

Lesser-known research conducted by John Kent, the author of a soon-to-be published book called *Psychedelic Information Theory*, suggests the former. Kent has deliberately ex-

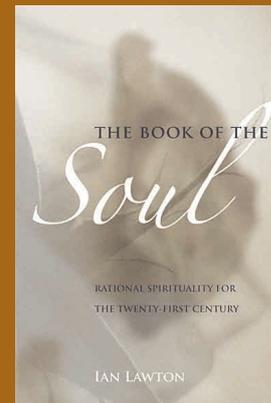
perimented with psychedelics and other altered states of consciousness for nearly two decades, and in particular has repeatedly taken DMT. He reports that he gradually learnt to control the experience by making the entities appear and disappear, and that as hard as he tried he could not “press them into giving up some non-transient feature that would confirm at least a rudimentary autonomous existence beyond my own imagination . . . the data that was given up was always relevant only to me.”

By contrast, researchers such as Mircea Eliade and Jeremy Narby have shown that in a genuinely *shamanic* context such entities, often in their more traditional animal-plant-human hybrid form, do have a genuine objective validity – because they have informed tribal shamans about combinations of two or more plant constituents that create a variety of successful cures for myriad health complaints, which are way beyond the statistical likelihood of mere chance or trial and error. Interlife regression subjects suggest that these are “elementals” and “nature spirits” who are responsible for guarding the various mineral, vegetable and animal life forms on our planet. But they also suggest that they inhabit merely the *astral* realms of earth, rather than the *etheral* realms that are the true spiritual home of all souls, and from which interlife regression subjects obtain their profound spiritual insights and wisdom.

I have not so far mentioned the profound insights into the underlying workings and essential unity of the “unseen universe” that are a universal feature of all psychedelic experiences. These seem not to be “realm-dependent”, and to be validated by modern science. Moreover, Jeremy Narby has suggested to me that natural substances such as ayahuasca, peyote and magic mushrooms produce far more spiritually insightful and profound experiences than their synthesised counterparts. So I do not wish to underestimate the power and potential of psychedelic experiences in general. But I also think we should be careful not to overestimate them. Bearing that in mind, I would suggest that we should continue to question whether they involve the merely astral or the

## 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](http://www.ianlawton.com), or via **Amazon UK**.  [URL](http://www.ianlawton.com)



genuinely ethereal realms; and, even in the apparently rare case of the latter, to what extent they provide more general insights and objective, verifiable information over and above that which relates only to our own personal, spiritual growth. Iboga in particular may hold some wonderful potential in this regard – but so, of course, does interlife regression.

[Note that further information and sources are available in my paper *Psychedelic Experiences in a Rational Spiritual Context* at [www.ianlawton.com/bosmisc3.htm](http://www.ianlawton.com/bosmisc3.htm).  [URL](http://www.ianlawton.com/bosmisc3.htm) ]

# Hamlet Was Right



I just arrived in Paris to finish a book when I got word of my mother's death. A compelling coincidence—it was a book on what happens to us after we die. The perennial mystery I was writing about suddenly got very personal. Intimate images of the one who packed my lunch, buttoned my collar, and sent me off to grade school bubbled up in my mind's eye.

In the crowd of my thoughts, the cold word never tussled with a wistful maybe. In other words, was that it? Of course, before modern science, most people believed in a life beyond—but what about today?

Toward the end of her life, I had the sad experience of being greeted by Mom as if I were a total stranger. Dementia had robbed her memory. "Mom, it's me—your son," I'd say. She'd look away or give me a blank stare.

My sick mother losing her memory would seem to prove there is no life after death; for as our brains go, so must our personalities. We may not like it, but science today pretty much sees the afterlife as a case of Freudian wish fulfillment and reduces our souls to the stuff we see in PET scans and MRIs. The ghost has been exorcised from the machine.

And yet, the old belief in a soul beyond the brain more than lingers on. It's hard to avoid popular mediums like John Edward and Sylvia Browne confidently declaring that our

loved ones are busy watching over us or at least blissing out in heaven. I can see why some people might cringe at such talk; after all, America has gone from hell-and-brimstone sermonizing to today's TV preachments of easy new age paradise for all. Neither view, in my opinion, is very credible.

Does that mean we have to bite the bullet of scientific materialism and give up the belief that

something in us survives death? In my search for answers, I was surprised to find that for over a century a steady trickle of scientists have been collecting reports suggesting that some people do survive death.

The picture I get from this research—which is still underway—is more intriguing than instantly gratifying. In fact, what it shows is that if there is a "next" world, it's closer than we think. And what's more, with a little luck, almost anybody might catch a glimpse.

And yet, for dubious reasons neither mainstream science nor mainstream religion seem to care about this ray of real light on the mystery. A significant source of knowledge on one of the basic experiences none of us can avoid having is ignored, played down, or dismissed with contempt. I can see no good reason why this should be so.

Maybe it's time to outgrow "new age" fantasy – and scientific bias – and look at some of the often-stunning facts. Psychologists since William James and Carl Jung took them seri-

*Maybe it's time to outgrow "new age" fantasy – and scientific bias – and look at some of the often-stunning facts*

“Could science help us solve the riddle of the afterlife” I asked a distinguished Christian minister. “That would degrade the value of faith,” he replied.

ously. So do small but qualified university enclaves around the world today. The challenge is real and the strange experiences won't go away. Scholars and scientists – it began in England – have been piling up reports of hauntings, apparitions, and mediumship. And there are the reincarnation studies of Dr. Ian Stevenson and the near-death research of Dr. Bruce Greyson, both at the University of Virginia. Unfortunately, the impact of all this work has yet to be felt by the general public.

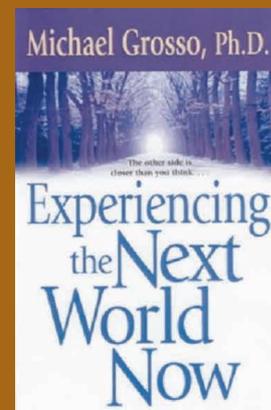
I found that resistance to it comes in many forms. “Could science help us solve the riddle of the afterlife” I asked a distinguished Christian minister. “That would degrade the value of faith,” he replied. A serious ecologist got angry with me when I posed the same question. “Fiddling while Rome burns,” he huffed. A neurologist smiled and declared that the soul was the brain – end of discussion. I asked a colleague who liked to flirt with the afterlife idea if he wanted my extra copy of a good book on the subject. His reply: “A book? Just words! – just words!” Later, he was candid enough to admit he was too frightened of death to try to think about it clearly.

By the way, it didn't happen to my Mom, but some people with Alzheimer's, or dementia, do recover their memories, and they light up with their old personalities – just before they die. So the soul spark isn't necessarily destroyed by the sick brain. The wire may be impaired but someone is still at the other

## 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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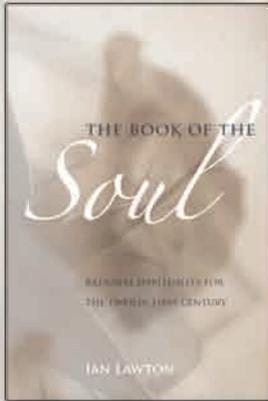
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end of the line.

I think we owe it to ourselves to keep an open mind about these unexplained recoveries – and they are only the tip of an iceberg of puzzling stories. We are entitled to keep the door open on the enigma of death. And Shakespeare was right – there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in mainstream philosophy.

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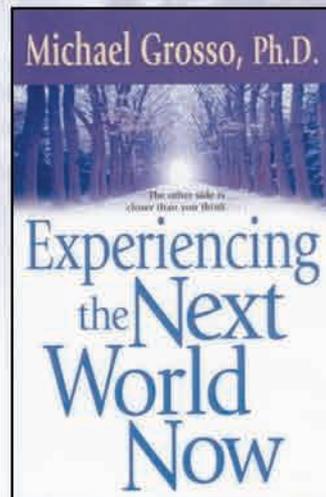
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My work can be found in this issue of Sub Rosa on the following pages: 26, 54 & 66



# UTOPIA IN AMERICA

BY GREG TAYLOR

*Many American politicians and evangelists claim a Christian birthright for the United States. In reality the Founding Fathers were not only ambivalent about 'organised' Christianity, but in some cases were even hostile to it, and were more likely striving to create a Masonic Utopia free from the constraints of the Church. This little-known fact is likely to play a large part in Dan Brown's next novel, 'The Solomon Key'.*

On the 18th September, 1793, the first President of the United States took part in a Masonic ceremony to officially mark the beginning of the construction of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. Wearing his own Masonic apron, George Washington marched to the site with members of a number of local Freemasonry lodges, and then descended into the construction pit which housed the cornerstone of the building. Washington placed a silver plate upon the cornerstone, and then made the standard Masonic 'offerings' of corn, wine and oil. The Masonic tools carried by Washington on this momentous day are still held at a lodge in

the District of Columbia.

To many of us today, it seems strange that such an important day in the history of the United States of America would have such an overtly Masonic theme. However, this may well be a topic that will soon leap into the public consciousness, as it is likely that best-selling author Dan Brown will explore the topic in his next book, *The Solomon Key*. Brown is on record as saying the upcoming Robert Langdon novel is on the topic of Freemasonry and "explores the hidden history of our nation's capital." No doubt a large part of this 'hidden history' will consist of the Hermetic blend of Masonic, Rosicrucian, and Utopian thinking which was prevalent

## What is Deism?

Deism is a religious philosophy grounded in the idea that any belief in 'God' should be through the human powers of reason, rather than divine revelation and supposed miracles. It gained strong currency in the 18th century subsequent to the Enlightenment, as scientism took root in European intellectual life. New discoveries, such as Newtonian physics, appeared to support the idea that the Universe behaves in a mathematically predictable ways, which could be understood by applying reason and logic.

The best understanding we can have of the Deism of the Founding Fathers is through the words of one of them, Thomas Paine:

*When the divine gift of reason begins to expand itself in the mind and calls man to reflection, he then reads and contemplates God and His works, and not in the books pretending to be revelation. The creation is the Bible of the true believer in God. Everything in this vast volume inspires him with sublime ideas of the Creator. The little and paltry, and often obscene, tales of the Bible sink into wretchedness when put in comparison with this mighty work.*

*The Deist needs none of those tricks and shows called miracles to confirm his faith, for what can be a greater miracle than the creation itself, and his own existence? In Deism our reason and our belief become happily united. The wonderful structure of the universe, and everything we behold in the system of the creation, prove to us, far better than books can do, the existence of a God, and at the same time proclaim His attributes. It is by the exercise of our reason that we are enabled to contemplate God in His works, and imitate Him in His ways. When we see His care and goodness extended over all His creatures, it teaches us our duty toward each other, while it calls*

*forth our gratitude to Him.*

*As priestcraft was always the enemy of knowledge, because priestcraft supports itself by keeping people in delusion and ignorance, it was consistent with its policy to make the acquisition of knowledge a real sin.*

This classical Deism has the Universe being created by a God who then withdraws and does not interfere in its affairs. Paine described this philosophy using the analogy of a watchmaker:

*When we see a watch, we have as positive evidence of the existence of a watchmaker, as if we saw him; and in like manner the creation is evidence to our reason and our senses of the existence of a Creator. But there is nothing in the works of God that is evidence that He begat a son, nor anything in the system of creation that corroborates such an idea, and, therefore, we are not authorized in believing it.*

This move from revelation towards reason was triggered by the Rosicrucian philosophy, and found its first genuine expression in the 'Invisible College' (which evolved into the Royal Society) in England. Founded by Rosicrucian and Masonic thinkers, this group literally gave birth to modern science. This combination of Deist, Masonic and scientific thinking can also be found in the Founding Fathers, perhaps most obviously in the figure of Benjamin Franklin.

It is bemusing to think that despite the modern view of America as a 'Christian' nation, some of its greatest statesmen and leaders were actually Deists. This belief was not only restricted to the Founding Fathers such as Franklin, Washington, Jefferson and Paine – Abraham Lincoln was also an adherent to the philosophy of Deism.

This brotherhood  
at one point  
contemplated  
emigrating *en masse*  
to Virginia in order  
to found their  
Utopian society.

throughout the European intelligentsia during the 17th and 18th centuries, and which appears to have found its way to the shores of America and played a crucial role in the founding of the United States of America.

The idea that the United States may have been founded as a ‘Masonic Republic’ based on Utopian ideals is not a new one. In 1897, an American army officer named Charles Totten wrote “there are mysteries connected with the birth of this Republic”. Totten had been investigating the strange iconography of the Great Seal of the United States, and through his research became convinced that the birth of the American nation could be related to the Utopian vision of the Englishman Sir Francis Bacon, which he described in 1626 in his allegorical novel *The New Atlantis*. The esoteric author Manly P. Hall also claimed in his book *The Secret Destiny of America* that Bacon himself had decided that the Utopian dream could be realized in North America.

Historian Ron Heisler suggests another link between Utopian visions in Europe, and the new colony in America. Heisler discovered that the German occultist – and staunch Rosicrucian – Michael Maier was in close contact with a number of individuals connected with the Virginia Company. This group of wealthy individuals had been granted a royal charter by James I in 1606, giving them virtually unlimited power of government in the New World colony. This charter had been drafted by none other than Sir Francis Bacon. Heisler believes that Maier’s well-known alchemical tract *Atalanta Fugiens*

“may have been deeply inspired by the Utopian vision of America.”

American scholar Donald R. Dickson provides yet another link between the Utopian dreamers and the Virginian settlement in his book *The Tessera of Antilia*. Dickson’s investigations uncovered the existence of a Utopian fraternity known as ‘Antilia’, which counted Valentin Andraea – the author of the original Rosicrucian documents – among its participants. Inspired by both the Rosicrucian tracts as well as the writings of Sir Francis Bacon, this brotherhood at one point contemplated emigrating *en masse* to Virginia in order to found their Utopian society.

Why were these groups so set on a ‘fresh start’ in the New World? The answer lies in the two dominant powers which dominated Europe at the time – the Church and the monarchies. Renaissance thinking, secret societies,



Washington Monument

and the printing press all posed new and growing threats to those in power. New scientific discoveries, such as Copernicus' heliocentric model of the Solar System and Newton's physics, were challenging not only the authority of the Church but also God's place in the cosmos. Secret societies – even semi-mythical ones such as the Rosicrucians – bravely raised new ideas and challenged the status quo. Scientism gave birth to Deism, which stood in sharp contrast to Christianity with its view that reason, rather than revelation, should be the basis of any belief in God, and that God would not intervene in his creation. As the Enlightenment dawned, many intellectuals found themselves as virtual heretics when compared with the religions, philosophies and governments which controlled European society.

Such was the breeding ground for ideas of a Utopian nation where freedom of religious thought and personal philosophy would be tolerated, and where government would be democratic and for the good of the people. Many Utopians, such as the great educator Comenius, dreamt of a society where men of opposing phi-

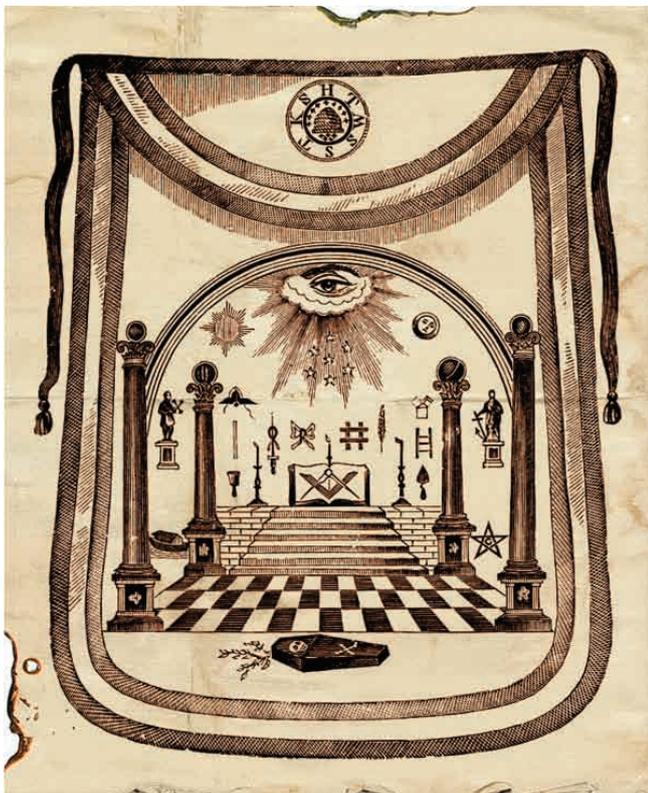
## Benjamin Franklin was also a Freemason and a Deist

losophies could still work together in the greatest quest of all – the search for knowledge. This pan-sophist philosophy had been enunciated very early on in Bacon's *The New Atlantis*, where a group known as the 'House of Solomon' was comprised of philosopher-priests united in this very goal. In Bacon's Utopian allegory, we find evidence of many of the philosophies persecuted in Europe: Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry, Utopian thinking and scientism. We find a similar combination in the life of one of America's Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin.

### Benjamin Franklin

The first documented evidence referring to Freemasonry in America was printed in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1730, a journal produced by Benjamin Franklin. He was gifted with an enormous array of talents – besides being a journalist and author, Franklin is also remembered as an influential scientist and political statesman. To complement his reputation as one of the great scientists of the 18th Century, he invented two common devices still used today – the lightning rod and bifocal spectacles. He is also the only Founding Father who is a signatory to the three foundation documents of the United States: the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Paris and the United States Constitution.

Benjamin Franklin was also a Freemason and a Deist. He was initiated as a Freemason in February 1731, and rose to the rank of Provincial Grand Master of Pennsylvania by 1734. As a publisher, he was in a unique position to aid the cause of Freemasonry in the New World. He published Anderson's *Book of Constitutions*, the authoritative Masonic document, in 1734. In 1756 he was inducted into the Royal Society in England, which we have seen was heavily Masonic and perhaps Rosicrucian in nature. And



George Washington's Masonic Apron

in 1778, while in France, he was initiated into the highly influential *Neuf Soeurs* ('Nine Sisters') lodge in Paris, which would boast Voltaire, Lafayette, Court de Gebelin and numerous instigators of the French Revolution as members.

Manly P. Hall, in *The Secret Destiny of America*, claims that Benjamin Franklin was part of the 'Order of the Quest', the secret movement to construct a Utopian democracy in the New World:

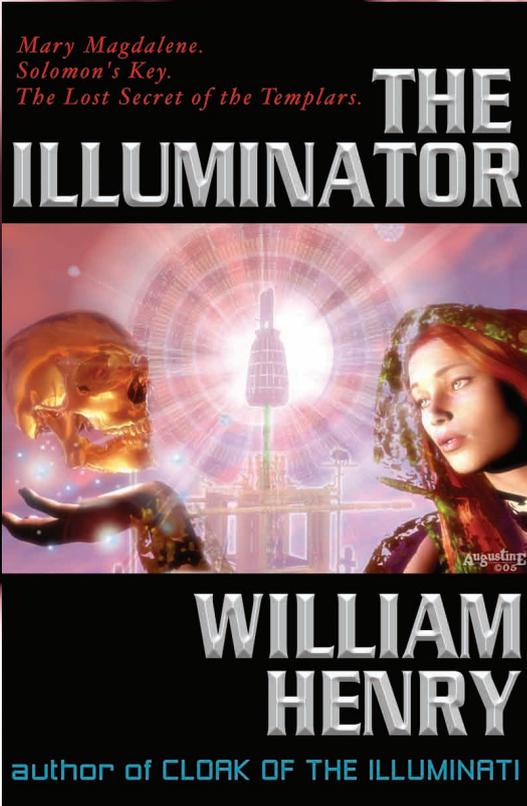
*Men bound by a secret oath to labor in the cause of world democracy decided that in the American colonies they would plant the roots of a new way of life...Benjamin Franklin exercised an enormous psychological influence in Colonial politics as the appointed spokesman of the unknown philosophers; he did not make laws, but his words became law.*

## George Washington

Franklin had been a Freemason for almost fifty

years by the time he signed the Declaration of Independence. He was not, however, the only Freemason involved in the Founding of the United States. As we have already noted above, George Washington was most definitely a Freemason. The commander-in-chief of the colonial armies during the American Revolutionary War was initiated into the lodge at Fredericksburg on the 4th of November 1752. He was 'raised' as a Master Mason only a year later. In 1777 he was offered the position of Grand Master of the planned Grand Lodge of the United States, but he declined (quite ironically) on the basis that he was not qualified for such a high office.

There is little doubt that Washington would have been more than capable of filling this position – his refusal to accept was based more on a genuine modesty which remained in evidence throughout his life. He refused to be paid for his military service, and left the room when John Adams recommended him for the position of commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. Despite accepting the post, Washington told



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## Washington held philosophical and religious views which suggest that he, like Franklin, was a Deist

the Continental Congress that he was unworthy of the honor. He was also reluctant to be seen using his power as President of the United States. Thomas Jefferson wrote of him:

*The moderation and virtue of a single character probably prevented this Revolution from being closed, as most others have been, by a subversion of that liberty it was intended to establish.*

In 1788, the year before becoming the first President of the United States, Washington did become Master of the Alexandria lodge in Washington, D.C., today known as the Alexandria Washington Lodge No. 22. The lodge became the site of the George Washington Masonic Memorial in 1932, a huge Masonic landmark modeled on the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria in Egypt, the 'Pharos'.

Despite attending church services with his wife, Washington held philosophical and religious views which suggest that he, like Franklin, was a Deist. He would regularly leave services before communion, a habit which moved Reverend Dr. James Abercrombie to compose a sermon scolding those in high positions for setting a bad example with their church attendance.

Washington responded by ceasing to turn up at all. When Rev. Abercrombie was asked about Washington's religious views later in life, he simply replied: "Sir, Washington was a Deist."

### Thomas Jefferson

Deism links not only Franklin and Washington, but also Thomas Jefferson as well – although the available evidence suggests that he was not a Freemason. Jefferson created his own person-

al Bible from the New Testament, by omitting the supernatural sections and leaving only the philosophical teachings intact. This unique compilation became known as the 'Jefferson Bible' – in the early 1900s approximately 2,500 copies were printed for the United States Congress.

While historians point out that there is no evidence to tie Thomas Jefferson officially to any Masonic organization, it is a matter of fact that he had great sympathy for the cause. In a letter to Bishop James Madison in 1800, Jefferson relayed his thoughts on Adam Weishaupt and his Illuminati. In what amounts to a defense of both Masonry and Weishaupt's Illuminati, against the conspiracy charges laid by the writers Barruel and Robison, Jefferson's allegiances clearly lie with the Utopian and Masonic ideals rather than Church and monarchies:

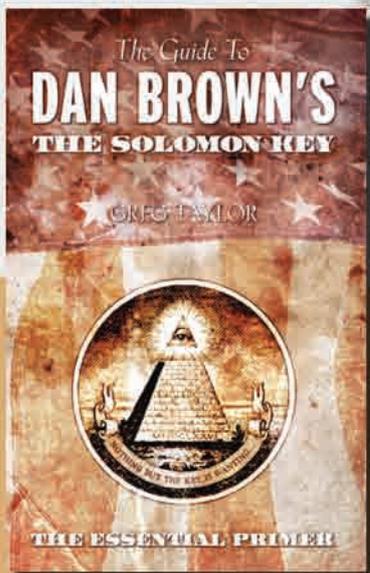
*[Weishaupt] is among those . . . who believe in the indefinite perfectibility of man. He thinks he may in time be rendered so perfect that he will be able to govern himself in every circumstance so as to injure none, to do all the good he can, to leave government no occasion to exercise their powers over him . . . Weishaupt believes that to promote this perfection of the human character was the object of Jesus Christ. That his intention was simply to reinstate natural religion, and by diffusing the light of his morality, to teach us to govern ourselves. His precepts are the love of god & love of our neighbor. And by teaching innocence of conduct, he expected to place men in their natural state of liberty and equality. He says, no one ever laid a surer foundation for liberty than our grand master, Jesus of Nazareth. He believes the Free Masons were originally possessed of the true principles and objects of Christianity, and have still preserved some of them by tradition, but much disfigured.*

*. . . As Weishaupt lived under the tyranny of a despot and priests, he knew that caution was necessary even in spreading information, and the principles of pure morality. He proposed therefore to lead the Free masons to adopt this object and to make the objects of their institution the diffusion of science & virtue . . . This has given an air of mystery to his views, was the foundation of his banishment, the subversion of the Masonic order,*

# What's in Dan Brown's next book?

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## Many Americans would be surprised to know that the man who coined the name of the United States had strong feelings against Christianity

*and is the color for the ravings against him of Robison, Barruel and Morse, whose real fears are that the craft would be endangered by the spreading of information, reason and natural morality among men...if Weishaupt had written here, where no secrecy is necessary in our endeavors to render men wise and virtuous, he would not have thought of any secret machinery for that purpose.*

Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, and as well as being the third President of the United States also served at various times as Vice-President, Secretary of State and ambassador to France. During his travels to France he accompanied his good friend Benjamin Franklin to the 'Nine Sisters' Masonic lodge. Many of his closest associates and confidantes were Freemasons.

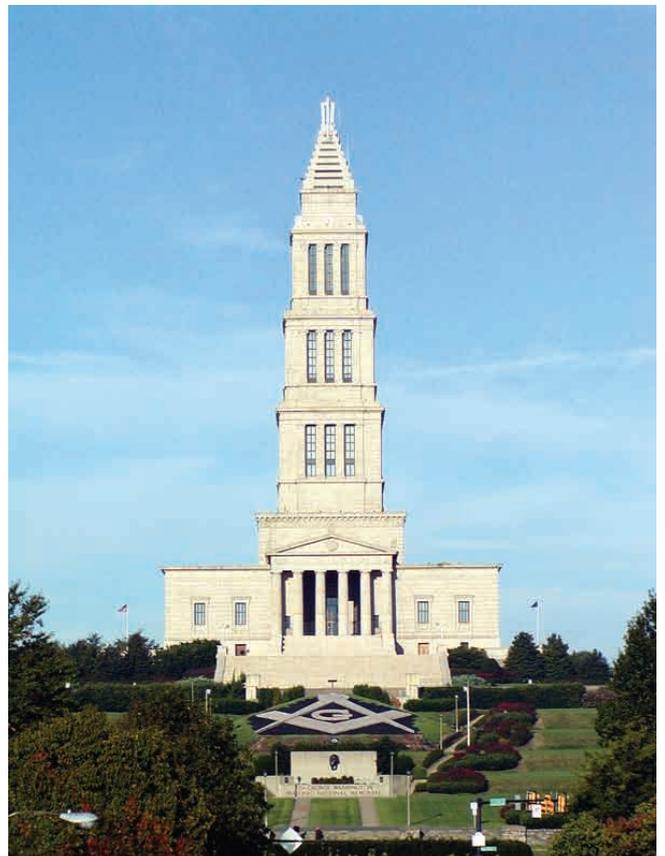
### Thomas Paine

Thomas Paine is yet another Founding Father who held strong Deist views. Born and bred in England, Paine didn't move to the colonies until his late thirties, only a matter of years before the Declaration of Independence. He emigrated on the advice of Benjamin Franklin, whom he had met in London. Barely a year after arriving, he published the massively influential *Common Sense* on January 10th 1776, which is said to have sold more than 600,000 copies in a population of only three million. His words inspired George Washington to seek the route of independence from Great Britain, and Thomas Jefferson partly based the Declaration of Inde-

pendence upon Paine's statements. Paine also has the honor of being the person to suggest the name of the United States of America.

This revolutionary thinker was sentenced *in absentia* in Great Britain for sedition, and despite his support for the French Revolution in his *Rights of Man*, was imprisoned and sentenced to death by the revolutionaries for arguing against the execution of Louis XVI. Miraculously, his life was spared when the executioner marked his door incorrectly. Many Americans would be surprised to know that the man who coined the name of the United States, and had such a profound impact upon its independence, had strong feelings against Christianity. In his *Age of Reason* he wrote:

*The opinions I have advanced...are the effect of the most clear and long-established conviction that the Bible and the Testament are impositions upon the world, that the fall of man, the account of Jesus Christ being the Son of God, and of his dying to appease the wrath of God, and of salvation by that strange means, are all fabulous in-*



George Washington National Masonic Memorial  
(Photograph © J. Alison)

*ventions, dishonorable to the wisdom and power of the Almighty; that the only true religion is Deism, by which I then meant, and mean now, the belief of one God, and an imitation of his moral character, or the practice of what are called moral virtues.*

There is no direct evidence that Paine was a Freemason. However, after his death an essay was published, said to be a chapter from Part III of *Age of Reason*, titled “The Origins of Freemasonry”. Whatever his official status was, Paine certainly had access to information about the Craft:

*The Entered Apprentice knows but little more of Masonry than the use of signs and tokens, and certain steps and words by which Masons can recognize each other without being discovered by a person who is not a Mason. The Fellow Craft is not much better instructed in Masonry, than the Entered Apprentice. It is only in the Master Mason’s Lodge, that whatever knowledge remains of the origin of Masonry is preserved and concealed.*

Paine believed that Masonry had a different origin than is stated in the myths of the Craft. He promoted his own view that Freemasonry was derived from the remnants of the Druidic religion, which was the most recent culture to bear a line of mystical knowledge which also passed through the hands of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians and Chaldeans. And ultimately, according to Paine, Masonry was based on the worship of the heavens, and in particular, the Sun.

Paine claimed that the veil of secrecy which Masons worked under was in order to avoid persecution by the religion which took over the worship of the Sun – Christianity:

*The natural source of secrecy is fear. When any new religion over-runs a former religion, the professors of the new become the persecutors of the old. We see this in all instances that history brings before us . . . when the Christian religion over-ran the religion of the Druids in Italy, ancient Gaul, Britain, and Ireland, the Druids became the subject of persecution. This would naturally and necessarily oblige such of them as remained at-*

## Paine believed that Masonry had a different origin than is stated in the myths of the Craft.

*tached to their original religion to meet in secret, and under the strongest injunctions of secrecy... from the remains of the religion of the Druids, thus preserved, arose the institution which, to avoid the name of Druid, took that of Mason, and practiced under this new name the rites and ceremonies of Druids.*

Paine’s enmity against Christianity has meant that to a large extent, his role in the independence of the United States has been swept under the proverbial carpet. Theodore Roosevelt inaccurately called Paine “a dirty little atheist” (being a Deist, Paine certainly did believe in a supreme being), and in 1925 Thomas Edison conceded that “if Paine had ceased his writings with *The Rights of Man* he would have been hailed today as one of the two or three outstanding figures of the Revolution . . . *The Age of Reason* cost him glory at the hands of his countrymen.”

We have seen that a number of the Founding Fathers of the United States were ambivalent, if not downright hostile, towards Christianity. A strong thread of Deism runs through the ranks of the influential personalities involved in America’s independence. But stronger still is the presence of Freemasonry. Not only were many of the Founding Fathers initiates of the Craft, but also numerous generals in the Continental Army, as well as other individuals who loom large in the drive for independence, such as the Frenchman Gilbert Lafayette.

This young idealistic French aristocrat took the position of Major-General in the Continental Army, with the request that he not be paid for his service, at the grand age of 19. His exemplary service for the fledgling United States earned him the respect of George Washington, whom he thereafter held as a life-long friend.

At the heart of the founding of the United States was the deep and abiding desire to create a new land where the tyrannies of religion and government were largely kept in check

Lafayette also spent time with Benjamin Franklin in Paris, where they were both members of the 'Nine Sisters' Masonic lodge – in fact, each supported an arm of the aged Voltaire as he was inducted into the influential organization. Lafayette's prominence in the Revolutionary War has led to approximately four hundred public places and streets in the United States being named after him. It is said that when American troops liberated Paris in the First World War, Colonel C. E. Stanton – on behalf of the U.S. General John Perching, a 33rd Degree Freemason – stood before Lafayette's tomb on the 4th of July 1917, proclaiming "Lafayette, we are here!"

One of the legendary moments in the move towards independence was the 'Boston Tea Party'. On the night of the 16th of December 1773, a group of Boston locals protesting the importation of duty-free tea from the East India Tea Company, boarded the merchant ship *Dartmouth* and dumped its entire cargo of tea into the harbor. While devoid of bloodshed, this incident marked the beginning of the Revolution, as it ignited colonial passions against the strictures and impositions of the parliament of Great Britain. What is unknown to many is that at least twelve members of the local Masonic lodge were involved in the Boston Tea Party – including the patriot Paul Revere – and at least another twelve of the participants subsequently joined it.

Manly Hall's *The Secret Destiny of America* claims that the creation of the United States

was the prime goal of the 'Order of the Quest', a secret society composed of intellectuals and philosophers which had survived from ancient times. Hall says that the creation of the United States was a step towards the ultimate aim of a worldwide democracy:

*All these groups [Knights of the Holy Grail, Christian and Jewish Cabalists, Rosicrucians, the Illuminati] belong to what is called The Order of the Quest. All were searching for one and the same thing under a variety of rituals and symbols. That one thing was a perfected social order, Plato's commonwealth, the government of the philosopher-king.*

It is difficult to reconcile this history with the modern mythology spread by American politicians and evangelists that the United States is a 'chosen land' for Christianity. In truth, its founders were largely non-Christian, indeed even anti-Christian, who took more from Freemasonry and Rosicrucian thinking than any other philosophy. At the heart of the founding of the United States was the deep and abiding desire to create a new land where the tyrannies of religion and government – such as the intolerance of opposing views – were largely kept in check. One can only wonder at what the Founding Fathers might think of the United States at the beginning of the 21st century.

## Profile

Greg Taylor is the author of *The Guide to Dan Brown's The Solomon Key*, which previews the topics in Dan Brown's next book such as the influence of Freemasonry on the founding of the United States. More information about the book can be found at [solomon.dailygrail.com](http://solomon.dailygrail.com).  URL

Greg is also the editor of the popular internet portal "The Daily Grail" ([www.dailygrail.com](http://www.dailygrail.com)), and is the editor-in-chief of Sub Rosa ([subrosa.dailygrail.com](http://subrosa.dailygrail.com)).  URL

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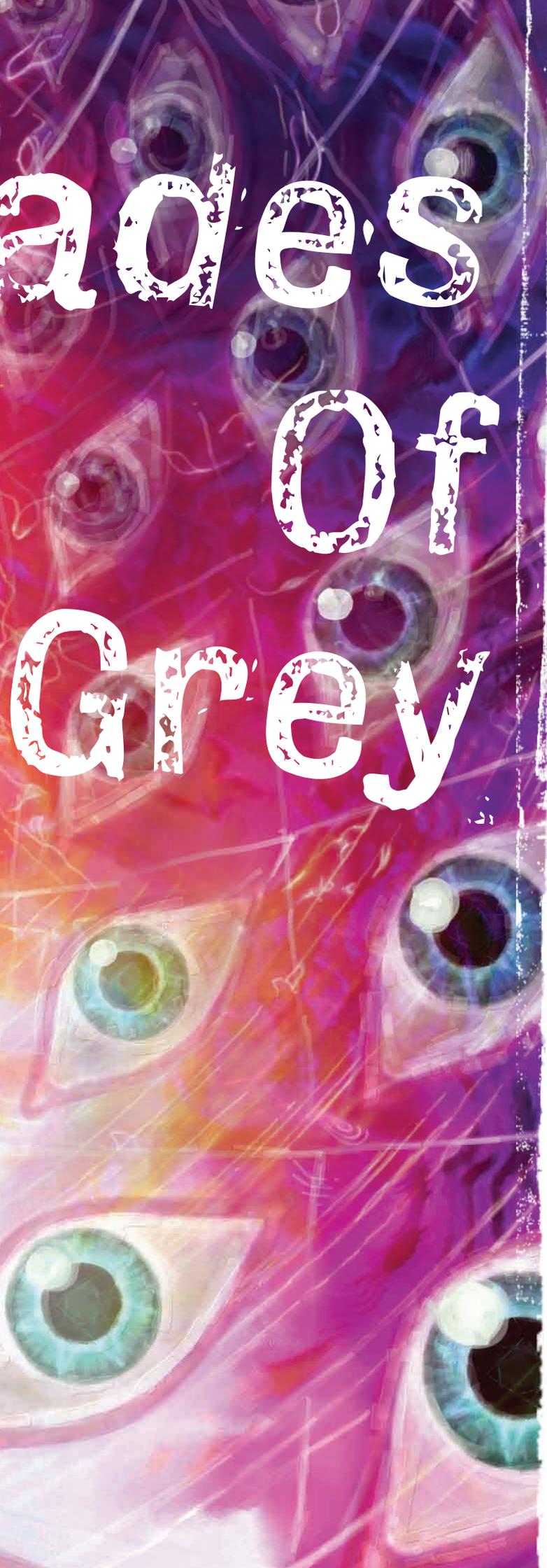


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# Adieu's Of Grey

## The Visions And Art Of Alex Grey

**A**lex Grey is one of the most well known visionary artists in the world. In the mid 1970s he had a series of entheogenically-induced mystical experiences which transformed his view of the world, from agnostic existentialism to a radical transcendentalism. Since that time, he has painted some of the most recognizable and inspiring sacred art of recent decades. His art has graced the cover of TOOL's *Lateralus* album, and Rick Strassman's book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*. Alex's large-format art book, *Sacred Mirrors: The Visionary Art of Alex Grey* has sold over one hundred thousand copies, an astounding number for an art book. In recent years he has focused on the construction of the "Chapel of Sacred Mirrors", a long-term exhibition of fifty of his works of transformative art, which opened in 2004 in New York City. Alex lives in New York with his wife, the painter Allyson Grey, and their daughter, the actor Zena Grey.

Illustration by Adam Scott Miller



**SR:** Thanks for taking time out for a quick chat with us Alex. Many of our readers first became aware of your work through your well-known images on the TOOL album *Lateralus* and the cover graphic for Rick Strassman's *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*, but may not know a lot more about you than that. Could you give us a quick history of your interest in art, your influences/heroes, and current projects?

**AG:** The answer to that question is a book . . . in fact it's three books – *Sacred Mirrors: The Visionary Art of Alex Grey* (Inner Traditions; 1990); *The Mission of Art* (Shambhala, 1997); *Transfigurations* (Inner Traditions, 2001). My website ([www.alexgrey.com](http://www.alexgrey.com)) has brief and complete bios.

I'm a mystic artist, that is, spiritual experiences happened that inspired my artwork to reflect this sacred dimension. I'm influenced by Michelangelo, William Blake, and Ken Wilber. I've studied Buddhism for many years as well as the mystical underpinnings of the pantheon of human and divine wisdom. I never finished art school and have no degrees but have taught in some of the best art schools which gives me perverse pleasure. I teach visionary workshops with my wife and partner of thirty years, Allyson ([www.allysongrey.com](http://www.allysongrey.com)), who is also the mother of our one daughter, Zena, an actor ([www.zenagrey.com](http://www.zenagrey.com)). We have just recently celebrated the first anniversary of the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors. The

I'm a mystic artist,  
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Chapel is an experimental art installation that Allyson and I and many other artists created to house the art and spirit of the Sacred Mirrors.

Right now I am working on a portrait of Dr. Albert Hoffman: Discoverer of LSD to commemorate his 100th birthday. He is still alive and well and his birthday is being celebrated in Basel with a conference on the study of LSD. My wife and I will be there in January.

**SR:** While we're talking hallucinogens – at this year's Mind States Conference you gave a talk on "Drugs and Art", which discussed the different themes and emotions which come through in various artists' work and the relationship to the drugs they used (including coffee, alcohol, amphetamines and hallucinogens). If you were to stand outside yourself and analyse your own work in this context, what do you think you would see - both in terms of the drugs used and the themes and emotions that come through in your art?

**AG:** My impression would be that this artist is an acid-head who has pierced the veil of material world illusion and

Gaia (right panel)



found some spiritual gold.

**SR:** When discussing alcohol in your Mind States lecture, you mentioned how it had the effect of 'loosening' the constraints of the artist. Do you feel that this 'loosening' - not only through alcohol but also other substances - is becoming more prevalent as a reaction to modern society, where rationalism and logic are the 'rewarded' traits, while creativity and freedom of the mind are not?

**AG:** I think you are talking about a reaction to

the pressures of modern life and the use of substances to escape those pressures. Alcoholism has been around as long as alcohol, which dissolves boundaries but depresses consciousness and kills brain cells. Societies from indigenous cultures to post-modern urban dwellers have sought altered states of consciousness through many means including meditation, whirling, ecstatic dance, drumming and all kinds of deprivation including food, sleep, isolation . . .

**SR:** In terms of the different methods of achieving altered states of consciousness, you are seen

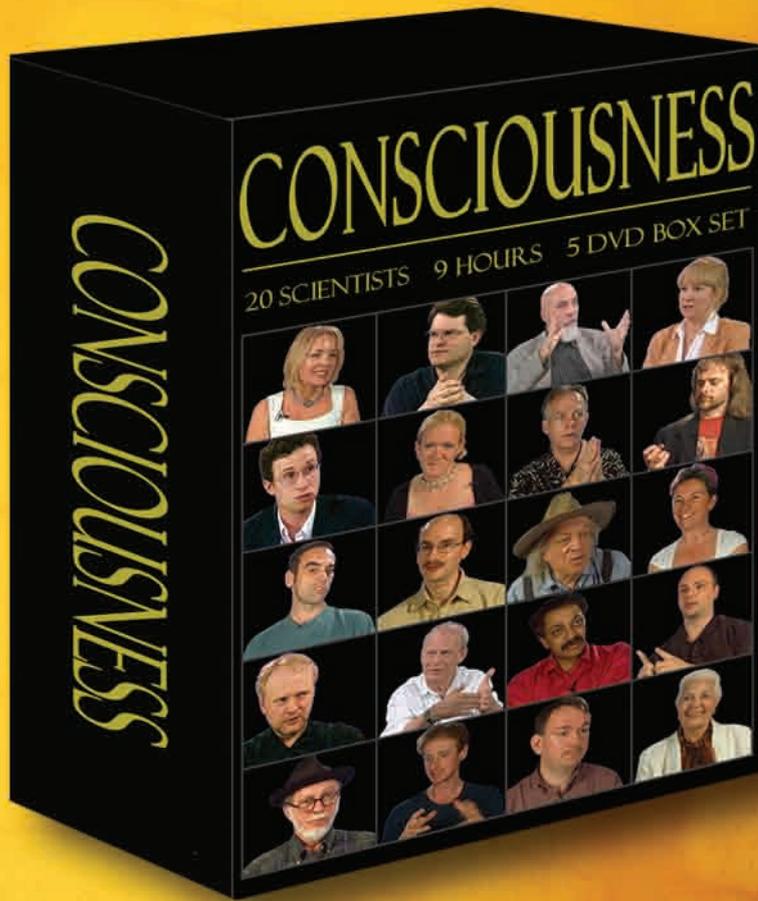


Artist's Hand

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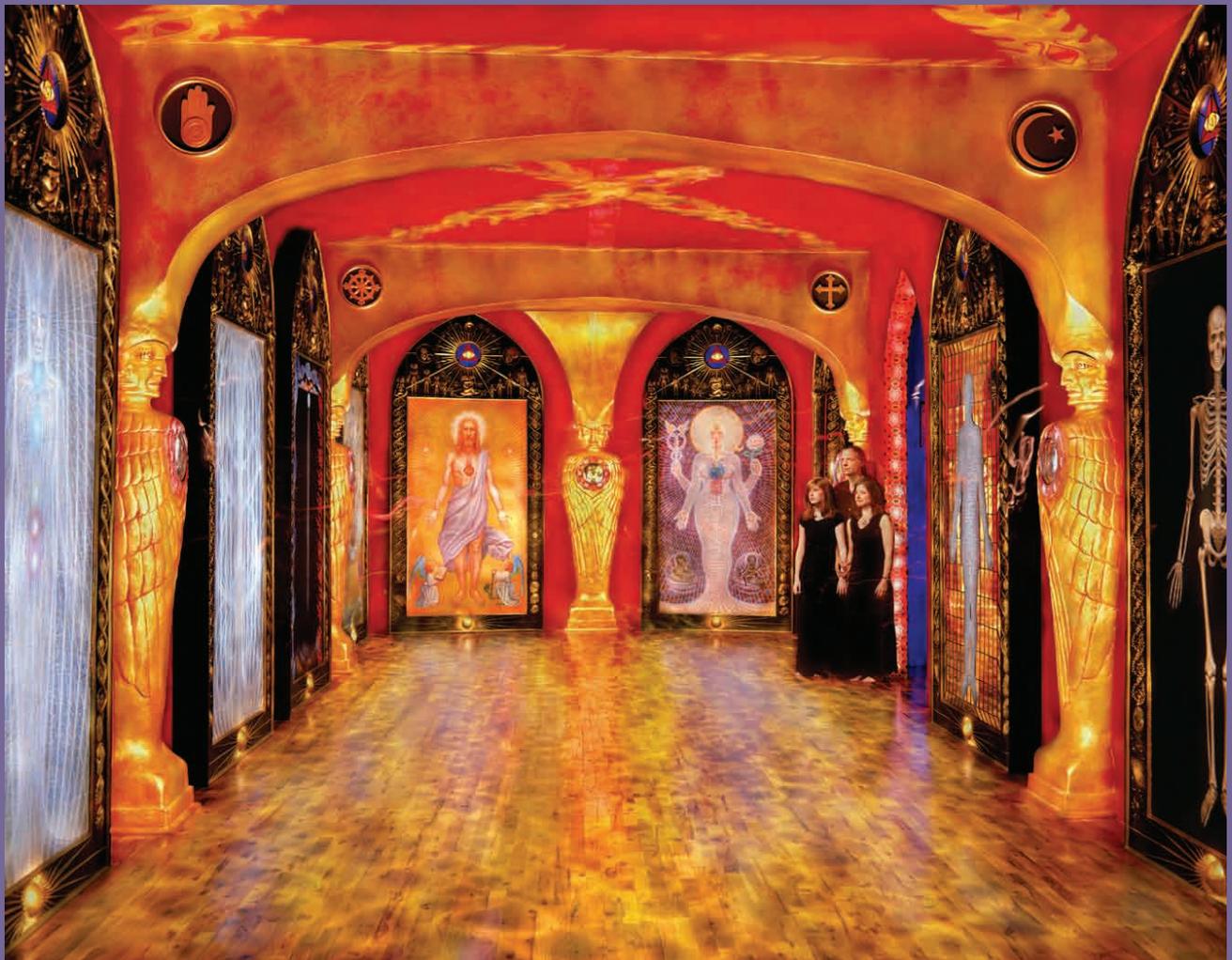
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## The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors



The Grey family at the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors

The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors (CoSM) arose out of a shared, simultaneous vision that Alex and Allyson Grey experienced during their first MDMA experience. Currently housed ‘temporarily’ (for a number of years) in New York City, the current incarnation of CoSM is meant as a “living brochure” for the eventual permanent structure of the Chapel – which Alex sees as a spiralic or twisted pyramidal form. It is home to many of Alex Grey’s greatest artistic pieces, including the ‘Sacred Mirrors’.

The Sacred Mirrors are a series of 21 framed images, consisting of 19 paintings and two etched mirrors, which present a life-sized ‘mirror image’ facing viewers, enabling them to identify with the art and integrate its energy into themselves. The anatomy of each image is precisely portrayed, while visionary elements allow the viewer to see themselves as reflections of the divine. The Sacred Mirrors underline the unity of human experience across all racial, class and gender divides.

## Alex Grey describes the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors:

“The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors (CoSM) was created to provide a space for spiritual renewal through contemplation of transformative art . . . there are devotional portrayals of the human journey from birth to death, with love and relationship, creativity, enlightenment, and social activism as the unfolding iconic narrative. The Chapel peels away our accumulated layers of separateness, showing that we are all made of the same miraculous blood, guts, and cosmic dust. For receptive people, mystic art can help catalyse their creative and spiritual path. CoSM has already begun serving as a cultural and spiritual centre. Our evolving community uses the space for events such as workshops on visionary art,

sacred geometry, and sacred architecture, monthly interfaith full-moon gatherings, and film, music and poetry evenings—all intended to inspire. We’re very excited to be open and receiving visitors.”

The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors is Alex Grey’s great dream, and is supported solely by charitable donations from the community. You can support his endeavour by making a donation to CoSM, or purchasing something from the webstore at the CoSM website ([www.cosm.org](http://www.cosm.org)).  URL

Watch a video of Alex giving a short tour of the Chapel, courtesy of [www.cosm.org](http://www.cosm.org). Does Alex Grey’s Gaia painting (1989) predict the World Trade Center attacks? (please note: very large file - broadband only)



Statue at the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors

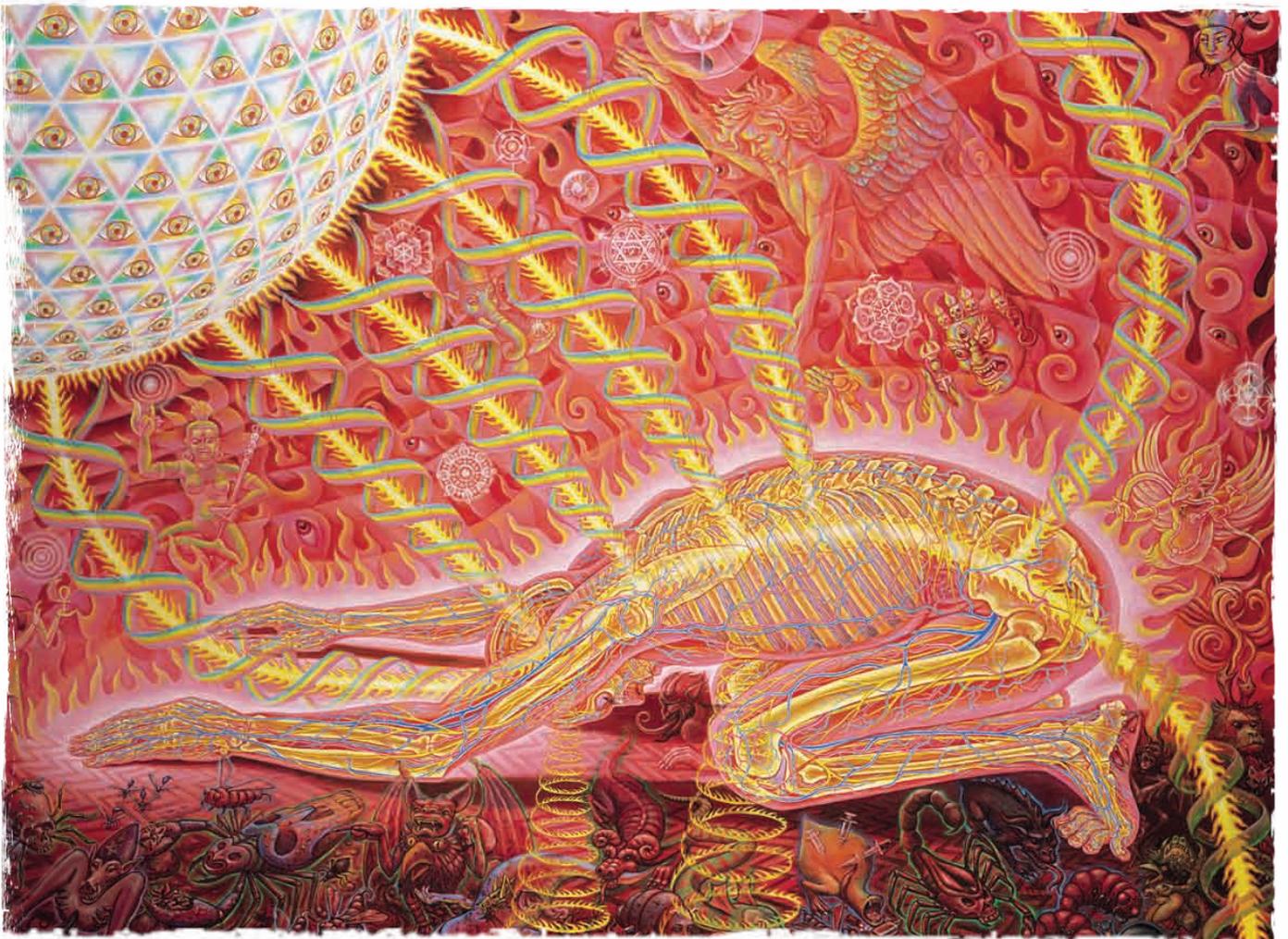
– rightly or wrongly – as somewhat of a spokesman for hallucinogen use. You also have a loving family relationship with your wife Allyson and daughter Zena. How do you integrate use of hallucinogens with raising a child and maintaining a healthy family relationship, considering firstly that you are pursuing somewhat of an ‘apostate’ lifestyle to the social norm, and secondly your own personal feelings of responsibility towards your family as a husband and father?

**AG:** I had my first LSD experience in Allyson’s apartment. It was our first evening together. Allyson was already a seasoned veteran.

I suppose you mean by ‘apostate’ that I may have renounced the conventional approach to family values, but some people have described my work as a kind of Norman Rockwell on acid. My imagery portrays mother and child nursing, kissing, praying, copulating – activities

that are basic to all humans and many animals, as well. The art is conventional in that it celebrates simple things like love, and attempts to map the dimensions of compassion and infinite consciousness that the evolutionary stream has brought forward. So, there are conventional and post-conventional elements in my painting.

Allyson and I have always told Zena the truth as we see it. We have not kept secrets about substance use, but have only answered questions that she asked us, not giving her more information that she needed or wanted. We also abstained a great deal from using substances while around her, not wanting to jeopardize her safety, or make her uncomfortable with our possibly unusual behaviour. Plus, when Allyson and I wished to partake of the sacrament we’d always prefer to be free from as much responsibility as possible, so we would put our daughter in the care of others during that time. Zena is



Prostration

now 17 and I will leave it to her judgment to speak for herself.

**SR:** The influence of your art and ideas is really beginning to show with the new generation of artists – such as Luke Brown [see our feature on Luke later in this issue – ed.] – and the Internet is showing the incredible amount of talent out there. What advice would you give young artists, in terms of balancing artistic endeavour and the need to survive in the modern world (i.e. pay the bills) where art rarely pays unless you are willing to pursue it within the corporate framework (eg. graphic design of advertising)?

**AG:** I would certainly advise young artists to put their artwork first. When looking for a way to pay the bills, stay as close as possible to your passion. I did medical illustration for twelve years, and although I hated doing it, I also got value from it and learned a great deal. Early on, I painted funhouses and later billboards, I worked in a library and spent a lot of time reading the books about altered states and the paranormal.

I had my first  
LSD experience in  
Allyson's apartment.  
It was our first  
evening together

I worked as part of a research team studying the affects of psychic healers on corn seeds and planaria. I always spent as much time as possible on my own artwork and really got quite a bit done during that time. No one sought me out for interviews then. (just kidding)

I cannot tell anyone how to make money. I certainly never did any of the things that other people told me to do in order to make money

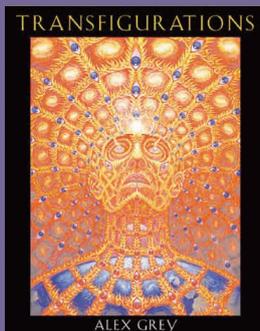
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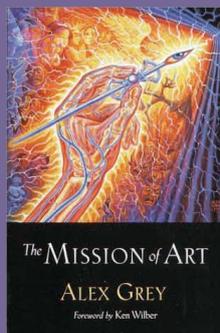
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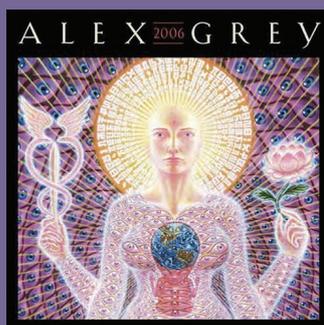
## More from Alex Grey



Transfigurations



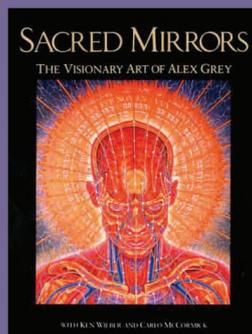
The Mission of Art



2006 Calendar

All books, as well as DVDs, clothing, posters and other merchandise can be bought directly from Alex Grey's online store. Additionally, books purchased from the webstore are individually signed by the author

<http://www.alexgrey.com/shop.html>  URL



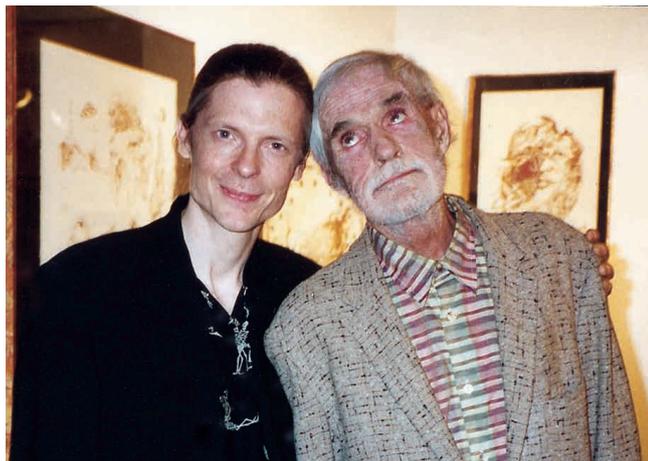
Sacred Mirrors

with my art. When I was in art school, a professor told me, "Alex, keep doing what you are doing, my boy, and you will one day be painting covers for TV Guide." That was when I began seriously deciding to quit art school because that is not who I was going to be. A gallery owner once told me to go with the current trend rather than doing the work I was doing. He meant well.

**SR:** A turning point in your life was when you had a transpersonal experience with your wife Allyson under the influence of LSD, where you both saw the same 'mind lattice' connecting everyone. Has this experience convinced you of some underlying ontological reality to the psychedelic experience?

**AG:** Of course. I'm a psycho-chemical mystic who sees an underlying unity in the timeless now shared by, and at the foundations of all world religions and visionary phenomena. We can look at Mohammed's ride to the Seventh Heaven. That was a visionary experience. We can look at the Annunciation and the Transfiguration and perhaps even the Resurrection. There is also the Tibet Buddhist pantheon of Higher World Buddhas. The Torah is full of Jewish mystics like Ezekiel who saw fiery wheels or Moses himself who beheld the Burning Bush. Could anyone point to a non-visionary religion? Maybe, but all of the religions I can think of came out of the mystical experience, direct contact with the divine, by some charismatic leader. I do believe that some people are more inclined toward visionary experiences than others. It is our intention, and the shared intention of many, to revisit the primary religious experience and the "Beyond Within". The visionary state is certainly what the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors is all about, no matter how that state is realized.

**SR:** You've had this life-changing experience using LSD, which is certainly a hallucinogen which lends itself time-wise to the contemplation and integration of the experience. Do you see any similar value to the smoked DMT experience, or is it better employed via the shamanic ayahuasca journey?



Alex Grey and Timothy Leary

**AG:** All three experiences have value. Smoked DMT is something like psychic bungee jumping. You bound briefly into another dimension sometimes getting very deep very fast. However prolonged immersion into the DMT influence via ayahuasca, can catalyse some of the most intensely beautiful visionary experiences, and is half the length of a typical acid experience. Acid is wonderful because it is so easy to consume and because Allyson loves it and with LSD we've had some of the most profound sacramental sojourns of our lives.

That said, integration of the experience has become one of my artworks steady challenges – to find different methods for evoking the radiance of the visionary realms through painting, a medium with a long history for human culture. For 18,000 - 40,000 years humans have been painting images. It's one of the defining characteristics of what differentiates human beings from animals. The integration of the entheogenic experience, in my experience, happens after the drug wears off and the work is to manifest new insights into ones creative life.

**SR:** I've heard a number of comparisons between the DMT trip and the work of another visionary artist, M.C. Escher – from the 'impossible figures' he is most famous for, to his tessellated patterns and even images of 'elves'. Rick Strassman discusses endogenous DMT in his book - could there be an argument for Escher having endogenous DMT flashes?

**AG:** Escher never claimed to be a mystic but he did say that he had strange and mysterious visions, as is evident in his art. I think Escher certainly could have been having endogenous DMT flashes, because there is always a psychochemical component to any mental experience, as long as you're operating a brain. DMT lives in the brain fulltime, as we all know. Neuro-chemicals tessellate with our brain waves in the mystical experience and dance to the incomprehensible consciousness that powers the universe.

**SR:** You talk about art having the potential to change humanity and our future. In what way do you think visionary art is able to achieve this?

**AG:** We often forget that what we know of the world is entirely dependent on our view, our vision of the world, which is possible to evolve and transform into inspiring aliveness, or to stagnate and atrophy into sinkholes of cynicism. The news media and other corporate sponsored culture have an agenda that we unconsciously consume as we tune into their worldview. The shrill lies that fuel corporate advertising, like, "happiness and satisfaction in life is dependent on the products we consume," ties us to a fear-based materialist and greed-centred worldview. There is no true spiritual liberation offered from the corporate media that we consume on a daily basis. It's no wonder that anti-depressants are current drugs of choice in our culture. Where do we

I'm a psycho-  
chemical mystic  
who sees an  
underlying unity in  
the timeless now

go for visions of freedom and reflections of our highest possibilities as a species – not to CNN. Today, I think visionary artworks can offer the “still small voice” of conscience, that may help people wake up from the mass media trance. It takes an engaged individual, willing to think for themselves and eager to enlarge their world-view, to spend time contemplating visionary art and embrace the divine imagination reflected there, source of creative solutions for our current growing problems. Visionary art can be a sacred mirror introducing us to our own

untapped potentials, in this way it can catalyse and validate people’s path to a sustainable and saner future.

You can learn more about Alex Grey, view galleries of his artwork, and purchase goods at his official website, [www.alex-grey.com](http://www.alex-grey.com).  [URL](http://www.alex-grey.com) More information about the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors can be found at [www.cosm.org](http://www.cosm.org).  [URL](http://www.cosm.org)



Bardo Being

**Visionary art can be a sacred mirror introducing us to our own untapped potentials . . .**

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John Anthony West, Author, *Serpant in the Sky*



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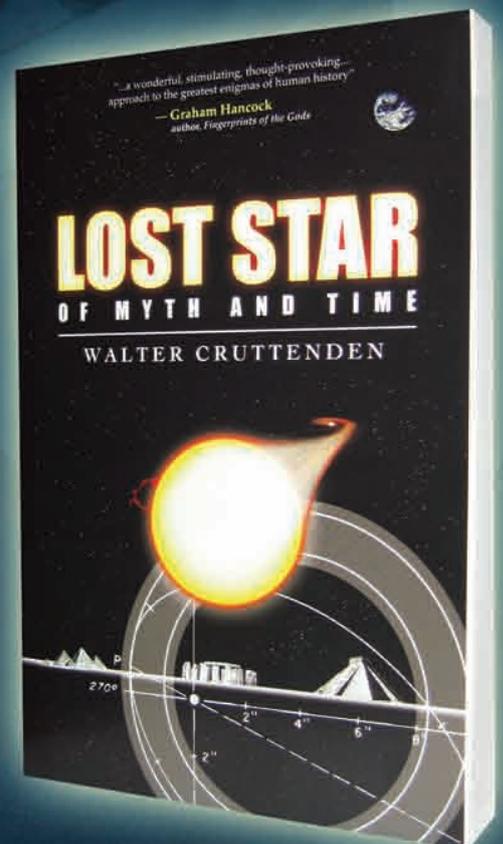
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# Roslyn



# AND THE Grail

*For the last ten years two Scottish historians, Mark Oxbrow and Ian Robertson, have been on a quest to uncover the real story of Rosslyn. They have unearthed lost tales of the Rosslyn treasure, investigated legends of Templars, and hunted ghosts in the chapel and castle. In *Rosslyn and the Grail* they reveal Rosslyn's connections to King Arthur and the quest for the Holy Grail, the history of Rosslyn and the St Clairs, and the secret story of the chapel that has remained hidden for 500 years.*

*by Mark Oxbrow*

In the last few years Rosslyn Chapel has become world famous. Millions of people have read about the tiny 15th century Scots church in Dan Brown's phenomenally popular novel *The Da Vinci Code*. In 2005 over a hundred thousand grail-seekers and DVC tourists visited Rosslyn to gaze in wonder at the chapel's incredible stone carvings and to search for hidden clues that might lead to the Holy Grail.

It has been said that Rosslyn hides any number of fabled secret treasures including: the Holy Grail, the True Cross, the golden plate of the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth, the Ark of the Covenant, the embalmed Head of

Christ, the treasure of the Temple of Jerusalem, and the Lost Gospels of Jesus. Over the last twenty years the chapel has appeared in a number of alternative history books. Authors including Knight and Lomas, Tim Wallace-Murphy and Andrew Sinclair have theorised that Rosslyn Chapel is closely connected to the Knights Templar.

In reality Rosslyn Chapel has kept its secrets for the last five hundred years. Many authors have constructed highly speculative theories about Rosslyn but none have come close to understanding the true nature of the chapel or revealing the real architects of Rosslyn's



wondrous design.

*Rosslyn and the Grail* is our attempt to tell the real story of Rosslyn Chapel and Castle - to set the record straight regarding the Templar theories, the Holy Grail, and *The Da Vinci Code*. At its heart, *Rosslyn and the Grail* is a book of legends, ghost stories and curious tales. We carefully explore these stories and investigate the actual history of the chapel, the castle and the St Clairs of Rosslyn.

I met my co-author Ian Robertson about ten years ago at a Sauniere Society Symposium. I had just given my first ever public lecture about Rosslyn Chapel. I was pretty convinced before I started that I was going to throw up. Speaking in front of a crowd is hideous enough but I had the added misfortune of somehow having to follow Henry Lincoln. If you've ever seen Henry hold an audience enthralled with tales of adventure in the Languedoc you'll understand that he's an unfeasibly tough act to follow.

What made matters worse was the fact I was about to tell the assembled crowd that the theories linking the Templars and Rosslyn were total nonsense! The Symposium was taking place in the recently renamed 'Templar Lodge Hotel' and many people in the audience

were keen to believe the alternative history notions about Rosslyn. They wanted to believe that refugee Templars had fled persecution in France and sailed to Scotland, that the Templars were given safe haven by the St Clairs of Rosslyn and that the chapel is a monument to Templar knowledge and the secret resting place of their legendary treasure. It's a great story but you might as well believe in Hogwarts or Narnia - it is pure fantasy.

In the last ten years I've finally realised that you can't talk someone out of a belief - no matter how much counter evidence you present. I tend to side with the theory of evolution. It's 'just a theory' but given the choice between the evolution of species and the literal creation of the world in seven days by an omnipotent God, I'm going to side with Darwin. At this moment a creationist museum is being built in America where dinosaurs will be shown entering Noah's Ark and co-existing with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. When faced with an animatronic quasi-Biblical Jurassic Park costing 25 million dollars to construct, you pretty much have to admit defeat and realise that no amount of contrary evidence is going to change someone's belief. But hey, it's worth a try.

Sir William actually gave damning testimony against the Knights Templar. Would he really have betrayed his fellow knights?

So, on that bright Saturday afternoon I tried to outline the pros and cons of the Templar theories. The more you research the history of a person, try to understand them and learn about their life and death, the more you feel the need to defend them when someone writes something about them that is clearly untrue. At the turn of the 14th century a Scots knight named Sir William St Clair fought in the Wars of Independence, married, had children and died on a battlefield in Spain as he tried to bear the heart of King Robert the Bruce to Jerusalem.

Andrew Sinclair convinced himself that a stone grave slab with an eight-spoked wheel and a sword inscribed upon it somehow proved

that William was a Grand Master of the Knights Templar. This makes absolutely no sense at all. If William had been a Templar then he was a treacherous man without honour. He would have broken his strict Templar oath to remain celibate and to never fight fellow-Christians, by openly marrying and becoming a father, and by joining Robert the Bruce to fight the English army. Worse than that, Sir William actually gave damning testimony against the Knights Templar. Would he really have betrayed his fellow knights?

The Templars were brought to trial in Scotland in 1309. The transcript of the trial is actually quite easy to find. It took me less than a week to track it down. It surprised me that a number of writers who published their theories about the Templars and about Rosslyn didn't seem to have found the trial documents. It is the only piece of contemporary historical evidence that in any way at all links the St Clairs of Rosslyn and the Templars so why isn't it quoted in their books about the Templars and Rosslyn? In 1309, at Holyrood in Edinburgh, Sir William St Clair and his father Henry testified against the Knights Templar. Sir William was never a Templar - he actively disliked the order. The Templar order was destroyed over a century before work began on the building of Rosslyn in 1446. The eight-spoked wheel and sword inscribed

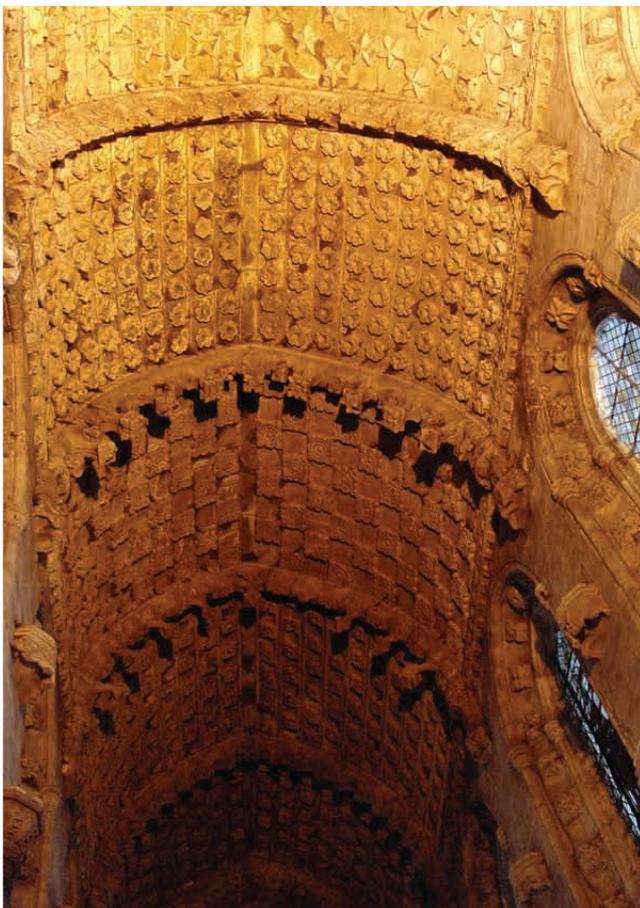


on the grave slab are in reality the symbols of St Catherine, the family saint of the medieval Rosslyn St Clairs.

After my talk Ian introduced himself and we talked about the various bizarre and interesting things we had each discovered. Ian had grown up in Penicuik, a few miles from Rosslyn, and I had grown up in Edinburgh. We had both spent unhealthy amounts of time in libraries and archives trying to uncover the real story of Rosslyn. It seemed like a good idea to work together on a book. Ten years later we wrote *Rosslyn and the Grail*.

A lot happened in those ten years. I wrote a book on Halloween and moved to London to work for the BBC. I became a father and a husband. Ian co-authored *The Quest for the Celtic Key* and became the curator of a private craft guild museum in Edinburgh. We both had (and still have) fulltime 'proper' jobs as well. In those ten years we also gradually pieced together the story of Rosslyn.

It is impossible to glimpse the true wonder of Rosslyn Chapel in a photograph. When you



Each carving was carefully placed in a specific part of the chapel so that you follow the story as you walk clockwise around the chapel

set foot inside the chapel you are enfolded in a medieval world of knights and dragons, gargoyles, griffins and green men, lions and camels, Angels baring books and scrolls, unicorns and monkeys, folk devils with ass's ears and goat's horns, Apostles, Saints and stories from the Bible. Pillars and arched windows are intricately carved with vines, leaves and flowers. The whole chapel seems to be alive. Everything appears to be completely random, a bewildering jumble of images and symbols. For five hundred years people have tried to understand how the carvings of Rosslyn Chapel can be read. It took us over twenty years to begin to figure out the secrets of Rosslyn.

We carefully examined every carving in the chapel. One by one we researched their meaning in the context of medieval Scotland. Slowly we were able to piece together individual clues until slowly everything started to fall into place. The whole of Rosslyn Chapel was built to be read like a giant picture book. It has a beginning, middle and end. Each carving was carefully placed in a specific part of the chapel so that you follow the story as you walk clockwise around the chapel.

As we began to understand how to 'read' the chapel our admiration for Rosslyn's architects grew. They had designed a medieval treasure that is not only a fabulous work of art and architecture but an incredible vision of medieval cosmology connecting light and dark, the stories of the Gospels, day and night, spring, summer, autumn and winter, and birth, life and death. Uncovering the secret of Rosslyn Chapel

effectively allows you to travel back in time five hundred years and gain an astonishing insight into what its makers believed.

The tens of millions of people who have read *The Da Vinci Code* have been told by Dan Brown that Rosslyn Chapel was actually built by the Knights Templar. However, it is a well established historical fact that Sir William St Clair, Lord of Rosslyn and third Earl of Orkney founded Rosslyn Chapel. William (a descendant and namesake of the William who fell in battle in Spain) was a powerful Scots noble, advisor to the king and Scots ambassador to France and admiral of the fleet. He was not a Templar.

Sir William was the patron and founder of the chapel but was he really the sole mastermind who oversaw every minute detail of design and construction? Over the years we worked hard to gather together every fragment of historical evidence that exists about medieval Rosslyn. It became clear that in reality three people deserved the credit for the creation of Rosslyn Chapel: Sir William St Clair, Elizabeth Douglas, and Sir Gilbert Hay.

Sir William St Clair is said to have had all the figures in the chapel first carved in wood so he could approve them before they were carved in stone

Sir William St Clair 'caused artificers to be brought from other regions and foreign kingdoms . . . masons, carpenters, smiths, barrowmen and quarriers' to build Rosslyn Chapel. He is said to have had all the figures in the chapel first carved in wood so he could approve them before they were carved in stone. William paid to have Rosslyn Chapel built as a lasting testimony to his devotion to his God and also as a mark of his wealth and influence. He brought

## 'CHIVALRY, KNIGHTS, AND THE GRAIL — A QUEST FOR MALTA' TOUR



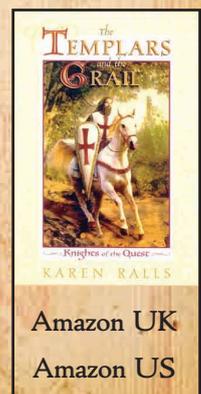
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together the finest craftsmen and artisans to create Rosslyn Chapel or, as it was recorded in a 1523 charter, the Collegiate Church of St Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist of Rosslyn, in the diocese of Saint Andrew.

Elizabeth Douglas was William's first wife. She had been raised in France. Her father was Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas and first Duke of Touraine. The Scots were close allies of the French against the English throughout the mid-

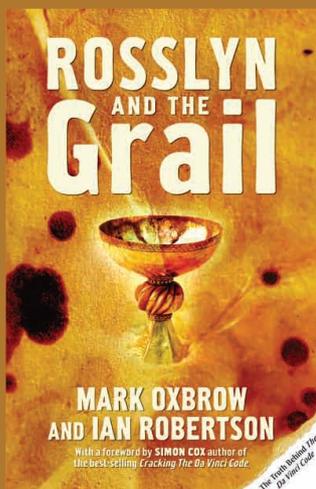
The chapel was not just a working church or a medieval story book. It was a wondrous memorial to his first love

## Rosslyn And The Grail

Tens of millions of people worldwide have read about Scotland's Rosslyn Chapel in Dan Brown's blockbuster novel *The Da Vinci Code*, but what is the real story of Rosslyn and the Grail?

*Rosslyn and the Grail* reveals tales of Templars and hidden treasures, hauntings and brutal murders, Joan of Arc and Mary Queen of Scots, Merlin the Wizard and King Arthur.

After 500 years shrouded in mystery and legend, and over a decade of research, Mark Oxbrow and Ian Robertson have finally uncovered the secrets of the chapel, the castle, the Knights of the Round Table and the Quest for the Holy Grail.



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dle ages. In 1424, at the Battle of Verneuil, Elizabeth's father, brother James and first husband John Stewart were slain. Eight years later, in 1432, Elizabeth married William St Clair, her third husband. They are said to have married for love.

Elizabeth was noted for her beauty, her love of learning and her piety. We discovered that her brother Archibald, the fifth Earl of Douglas, helped to fund the reconstruction of part of Glasgow Cathedral when it was struck by lightning and badly damaged by fire in the early 1400s. The plan of Rosslyn Chapel is virtually identical to Glasgow Cathedral's East Quire. Rosslyn was planned as a huge cruciform church and ultimately as a centre of learning. In 1451 Glasgow University was founded at Glasgow Cathedral.

It became clear that Elizabeth played an important unsung role in the founding of Rosslyn. It is even possible that the creation of Rosslyn Chapel was actually Elizabeth's idea: the ultimate expression of her devotion to God and learning. As the only words carved into the interior of Rosslyn Chapel say:

*Wine is strong. The King is stronger.  
Women are stronger still:  
but truth conquers all.*

In 1452, six years after building work began at Rosslyn, Elizabeth Douglas died. William was 37 years old. He was father to four daughters and a son, and his beloved wife lay dead. Over the coming decades William spent a fortune realising a dream at Rosslyn. The chapel was



not just a working church or a medieval story book. It was a wondrous memorial to his first love. It was to be the place where he would spend eternity surrounded by his children and his lost wife. William and Elizabeth still lie at rest in the burial vault of the St Clairs beneath Rosslyn Chapel.

Sir Gilbert Hay, one of the foremost scholars of medieval Europe, was born and raised in Scotland. He was educated at the University of St Andrews, became chamberlain to the Dauphin of France and lived in the French court for over 20 years. Sir Gilbert was also a knight who may have fought alongside Joan of Arc.

At Rheims Cathedral Sir Gilbert Hay and Joan the Maiden looked on as the Dauphin Charles became King of France. Sir Gilbert only returned to Scotland in 1445. He moved directly into Rosslyn Castle where, under the patronage of Sir William St Clair, he began to translate into Scots the continental *L'Arbre des Bataille*, *L'Ordre de Chevalerie* and *Le Gouvernement des Princes* – famed books of knighthood and chivalry.

Sir Gilbert Hay moved back to Scotland a year before Rosslyn Chapel was founded. He lived at Rosslyn Castle, with Sir William as his patron and friend, as the first stones of the chapel were laid. Sir Gilbert Hay was a knight, a scholar and a poet. He was remembered in the 16th century poem, *The Lament for the Makaris*, as one of Scotland's greatest men of literature. There is no surviving historical source that confirms that Sir Gilbert Hay was the 'secret architect' of Rosslyn Chapel. But he was the right

man, in the right place, at the right time.

Rosslyn Chapel has survived wars and religious upheavals. For decades it lay abandoned, left to crumble and fall to ruin. Rosslyn was forgotten. After five hundred years its story and true meaning grew secret. Now Rosslyn has become one of the most famous places in the world. People from all over the world come to visit the chapel and millions of pounds are being spent on preservation and conservation work. In *Rosslyn and the Grail* we have fought to uncover the truth about the chapel. After five hundred years the real story of Rosslyn can finally be told.

See the REVIEW section of this issue for more details on *Rosslyn And The Grail*.

## Profile

Ian Robertson and Mark Oxbrow are internationally respected writers and speakers on Arthurian and Grail legends, British folklore, Freemasonry, and the history and legends of Rosslyn. They are both Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

Ian Robertson is the co-author of *The Quest for the Celtic Key*, acclaimed as 'a must-read book for all who sense the mystery and magic of our distant past'. Robertson is the custodian of a private craft guild museum in Edinburgh and keeper of a renowned relic said to be linked to the Crusades.

Mark Oxbrow is the author of *Halloween*, widely considered the definitive history of Halloween. Mark also contributed to the bestselling *Cracking the Da Vinci Code*, UK and US TV and DVD documentaries, and has lectured widely including guest lectures for the Folklore Society and Université de Bretagne.

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# Evolving Visions: Luke Brown

**Bio:** Luke Brown is an intrepid explorer, part of a new generation of visionaries re-constructing the templates of culture as we know it. His art speaks of the spiritual mysteries in the human imagination. Mystical experiences, dreams, medicine journeys, and channelled lucid dialogues with the source of creativity itself, seem to guide and be guided by the colourful symmetries and living surfaces of his art. Much of his work is a graceful synthesis of digital and painting mediums. Developing his work through mix and remix technologies, Luke is constantly redefining his style as a spiritual medium for growth.

It is rumored that moments after his birth, he assumed full lotus posture and led the entire hospital staff in a rolling Aum. (Although the source of that information was on the third day of a mountain top peyote trip and is somewhat unreliable.) What IS certain, is that Luke Brown is here on mother Earth with a divine purpose to assist in the awakening of humanity, through mapping his hyperspatial journeys with utmost accuracy, whichever medium seems best suited.

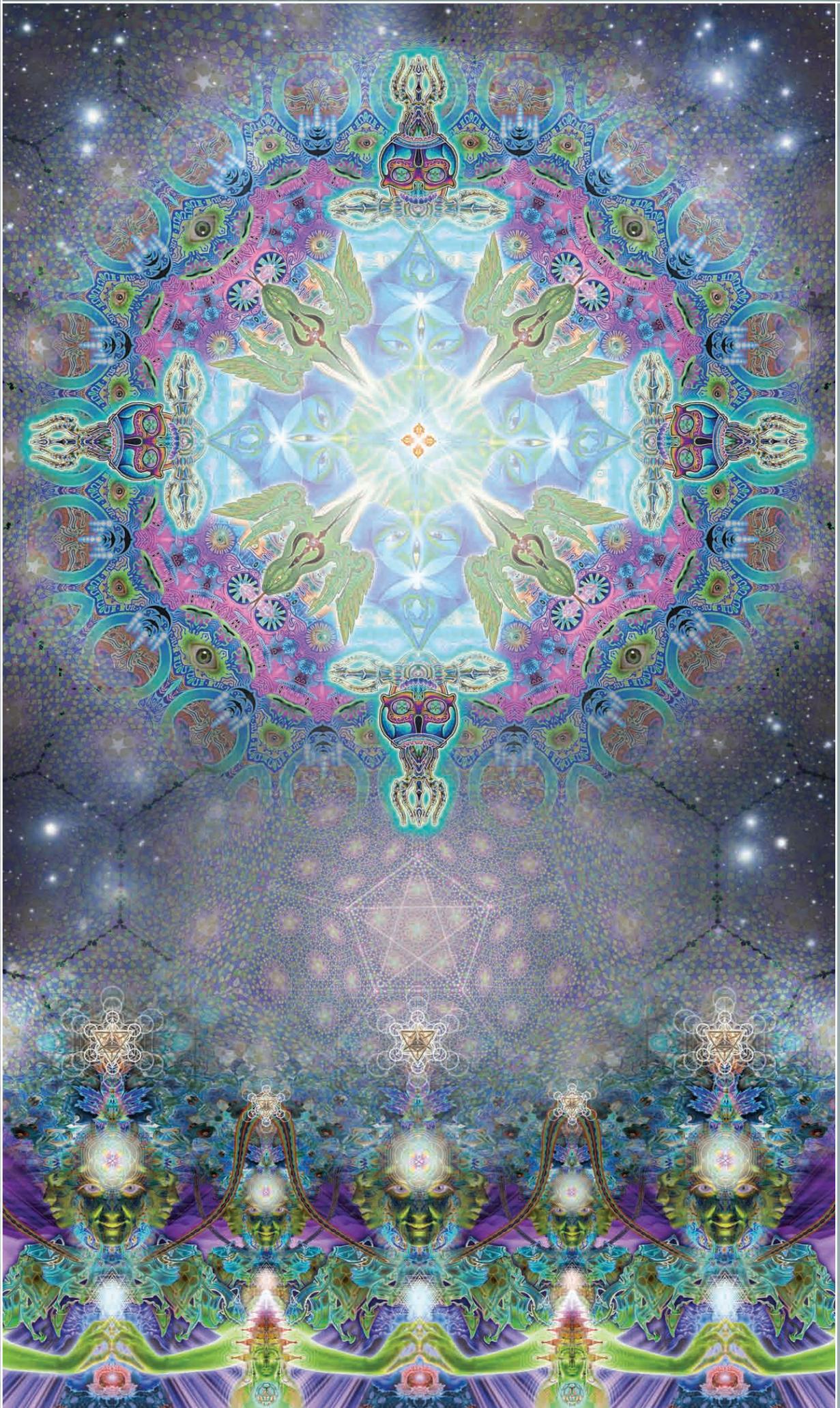
His art has been shown internationally with such visionary heavyweights such as Alex Grey, HR Giger, Robert Venosa and Ernst

Fuchs. He is currently a resident of the lush Elfinstone rainforest in BC Canada, one of an infinite number of parallel universes in which he resides within simultaneously.

**Influences:** All of the entheogenic plant teachers our highest expressions of our souls have sneakily disguised as something external from ourselves, to help us remember our highest expression of our souls . . .

**Inspiration:** All those who live fearlessly in the fullest expression of their infinite creative potential, giving those around them permission to do the same.

**Artistic Mediums:** I create 'components' of different mediums such as oil, acrylic, watercolour and pencil crayon. I scan these separate pieces into Photoshop where I digitally collage them together. I then print the finalized image onto canvas, where it is then stretched onto a wood frame and painted over with multiple mediums again. Occasionally, elements of these finished pieces are then sources for new 'components' to emerge from, or are directly scanned into photoshop to be remixed again.



Vajra Vision

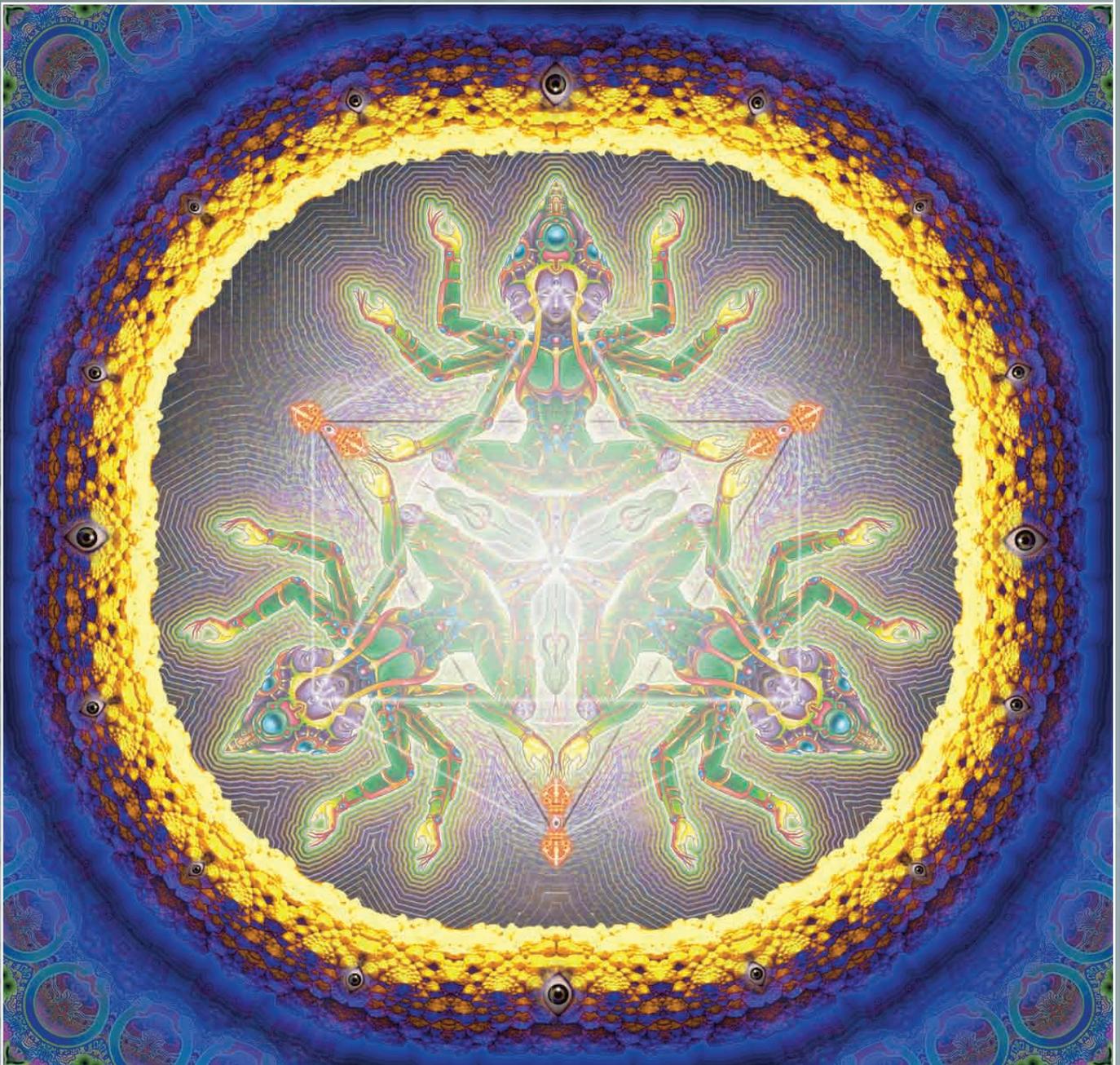


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Baphomet

## Artist Alex Grey on Luke Brown...

“Luke Brown is one of the best and brightest of the young visionary artists. He understands how to graphically translate the infinitely patterned tapestries of psychedelic mindstates, a truly remarkable achievement. Through his art, Luke blurs the boundaries between inner and outer worlds while helping us see the sacred beauty of both realms and the superconsciousness that connects them.”



Mantis Mandala



[www.spectraleyes.com](http://www.spectraleyes.com)

Namaste



Salvia Dalinorum

Luke Brown's artwork is on display at his website, [www.spectraleyes.com](http://www.spectraleyes.com).  URL For those interested in purchasing his art, there is a link on site to order prints. Originals and large scale canvas prints are also available by request.



Cat Goddess



# Rational Spirituality

## Evidence Not Faith . . .

by Ian Lawton

**W**e now have an abundance of compelling evidence that allows us to formulate what I refer to as a *rational* spiritual worldview. Primarily this comes from modern science, and also from thousands of ordinary people who have either had near-death experiences, or spontaneously remembered past lives, or been regressed into past lives or even the “interlife” between incarnations. These people provide incredibly consistent testimony, they come from all backgrounds and walks of life, they had no fixed religious or atheistic preconceptions before their various experiences,

and they have no agenda or axe to grind. This is obviously in stark contrast to the “revealed wisdom” of various prophets and gurus, whether self-proclaimed or otherwise, who have dominated the religious, mystical and esoteric landscape throughout human history.

So let us first examine the evidence.

### Scientific Developments

I am sure most readers will be aware of modern developments in theoretical physics, so I will be brief. These indicate that the original Newtonian idea of fundamental building

blocks of physical matter should be replaced by a model based on pure quantum energy, and also that multiple “nonphysical” dimensions exist. However much we still have to learn, in their own right these basic discoveries should be sufficient for any sensible person to realise that a strictly materialist worldview is hopelessly inadequate and obsolete.

### Near-Death Experiences

Let us now add to this the evidence from near-death research. One startling case should suffice here. Pam Reynolds’ experience occurred while she was being operated on for a massive aneurism at the base of her brain. The procedure was nicknamed “standstill” because her body temperature was cooled from ninety-eight to sixty degrees Fahrenheit, her heart stopped, and she was inclined on the operating table so that all the blood drained from her brain. She subsequently reported the typical experiences of leaving her body, and of entering a tunnel and emerging into the light, where she was greeted by deceased family and friends and felt an incredible atmosphere of peace, love and understanding before being cajoled to return into her body. But she also had verifiable recall of the “toothbrush-like” saw used to open her skull, of a conversation between medical staff concerning the arteries in her inner thighs, and of the music being played as she was being cleaned up at the end of the operation. These obscure and verified pieces of information all point towards her consciousness and memory having remained intact *throughout*, despite her having been clinically brain-dead for at least thirty minutes during an operation that lasted for some five

She also had  
verifiable recall of  
the “toothbrush-like”  
saw used to open  
her skull

hours in total.

The verifiable and obscure recall in this case is crucial. Whatever general comments they might make about endorphins producing euphoria and so on, materialists’ attempts to explain near-death experiences nearly always avoid these regular and crucial aspects. However this particular case has generated so much controversy that a number of sceptics have, for once, examined it closely. They suggest that Pam could still have heard conversations or music through the speaker-plugs in her ears – which were fitted to emit a regular pulse to check on her brainstem reaction – especially if her levels of anaesthetic were low at that point. I accept that this may be a valid assertion, particularly given that these parts of the experience occurred when she was not clinically brain-dead. However, none of them has been able to explain how she was able to “see” the saw used on her skull – which had an unusual design that a non-expert could not be expected to guess at – along with its “interchangeable blades” in a “socket-wrench case”; and all this despite the fact that her eyes were firmly closed, lubricated and taped shut throughout, and despite the fact that the saw was being used on the *top* of her head.

Although not of course supporting the idea of reincarnation, this and many other similar near-death cases suggest strongly that the soul exists independent of the physical body, and that the brain is not the seat of real consciousness – merely the main organism through which consciousness operates in the physical plane.

### Children Who Remember Past Lives

If we turn now to reincarnation proper, and to children who remember past lives *spontaneously* (as opposed to under hypnosis), the American psychologist Ian Stevenson of the University of Virginia has pioneered this research since the early sixties, and is only now starting to achieve the recognition he so richly deserves. Many of his cases also involve verifiable details that are so obscure they could

not have been obtained by normal means, unless deliberate collusion and deception was involved, and his methodology has been deliberately designed to spot this and other suspect motives.

To take just one of his more impressive cases, from an early age Swarnlata Mishra spontaneously recalled details of the life of another Indian girl called Biya Pathak, who had lived in a separate town some way away from her present home, and whose family was eventually traced. Stevenson found that in all she made forty-nine statements about her previous life, only a few of which could be regarded as in any sense inaccurate, and eighteen of which were made before there had been any contact whatsoever between the two families. These statements included identifying former family members, sometimes while being actively *misdirected*, coming up with little known nicknames, and even disclosing to her former husband that he had taken 1200 rupees from her money box – something known only to the two of them.

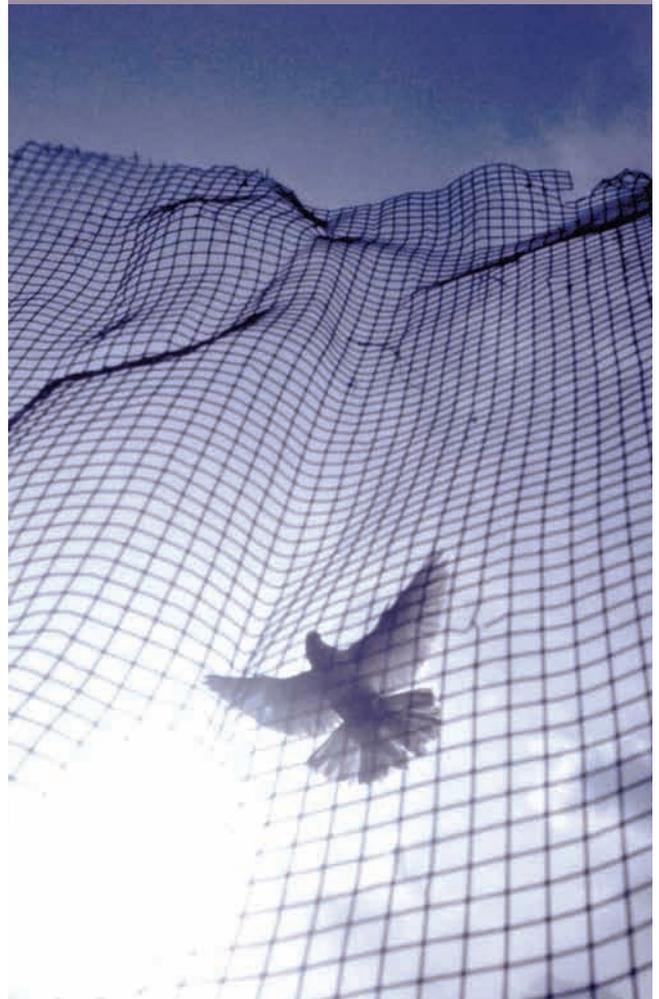
And there are other more specialised but crucially important aspects of Stevenson's research that we will return to shortly.

### Past-Life Regression

Our next area of evidence is that of past-life regression. We should be in no doubt that sometimes this *can* involve imagination producing elements of a past-life narrative from information acquired by normal means and sometimes consciously forgotten. But in many cases we once again find that historical details emerge that are not only verifiable, but also so obscure that they could not have been obtained by any normal means. Moreover the possibility of deliberate deception, which is about the only materialist explanation that might have held water in these cases, is for the most part so remote as to be negligible. One excellent case should again suffice to make the point.

Gwen McDonald, an Australian woman who had never been abroad before, was regressed by the pioneering psychologist Peter

This and many other similar near-death cases suggest strongly that the soul exists independent of the physical body



Ramster. She remembered obscure details of the eighteenth-century life of a girl called Rose Duncan, who lived in Glastonbury. When brought to England under controlled conditions by an Australian documentary crew, these details were all verified by local historians and residents – including obscure or obsolete names of places and people, obsolete elements of local dialect, and details of houses

and other buildings as they had existed in the eighteenth century. Most stunning was her insistence that she had been taken to a cottage in which the floor stones had been stolen from Glastonbury Abbey, one of which had an obscure carving on it that she had sketched while still in Sydney. When she led them to what was now a dilapidated chicken shed, and the decades of droppings were swept away, there was the carving exactly as she had drawn it.

So, however much experts might have argued over the Bridey Murphy case, for example, there are plenty of others that are incredibly strong. But not only that, there is another way in which past-life regression provides impressive proof of reincarnation, and that is in those cases which involve dramatic therapeutic benefits. Many of the pioneering past-life therapists of the fifties and sixties discovered the technique more or less by accident, often when regressing patients back into their childhood. Imprecise commands are taken literally by those under hypnosis, and when asked, for example, to “go back further” they suddenly began describing events that could not have related to their current life. Intrigued, the pioneers experimented further, and found that severe psychological and psychosomatic disorders that had often remained virtually untouched by years of conventional therapy were completely alleviated, sometimes after only a few sessions of past-life therapy – and irrespective of whether or not the patient, or for that matter the therapist, believed in reincarnation. It was this universal experience that convinced the pioneers – who were all scientifically trained psychologists and psychiatrists, and most of whom were initially of a sceptical or atheist persuasion – that this was no mere placebo effect, and that reincarnation is a reality.

### Alternative Paranormal Explanations

One potential paranormal explanation for this past-life evidence that would not involve reincarnation is that the subjects are tapping into some sort of universal memory or consciousness, and that the past lives accessed in this

way do not belong to the individual concerned. But there are two extremely strong reasons to suppose this is not the case. First, therapeutic results could never be obtained if this were what was happening. And second, most cases of past-life regression show clear karmic linkages between lives that are personal and individual. Nowhere is this more evident than in the most unusual cases investigated by Stevenson, those of children born with unusual birthmarks and defects. By investigating post-mortem reports and so on, he found that in a number of these cases they corresponded exactly to the wounds that killed the previous personality the child claimed to have been, and for whom other verifiable data had been given.

The other possibility often mentioned is that all these subjects are tapping into ancestral memories passed on in their genes. But again this theory does not hold water, for two good reasons. The first is that many past lives are found to be close together and yet to involve different continents or even races, at a time when people were generally not particularly mobile. The second is that many of Stevenson’s cases involve lives separated by only a few years, in which the two families involved are demonstrably *not* genetically linked.

### Unity, Individuality and Transcendence

There is no doubt that when dedicated spiritual seekers gain glimpses of the underlying workings and complete *unity* of the true ‘unseen universe’, whether spontaneously, via

One potential  
paranormal  
explanation is that the  
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consciousness



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Spirituality  
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**there is no judgment from on high  
souls reincarnate to advance karmically  
we all have karmic free will  
all karma involves learning  
we review our past lives and plan our next one  
the ethereal realms are governed by perception  
everything has soul energy  
the human soul is unique  
the physical world is an illusion  
balance, forgiveness, faith, patience are paramount**

Our aim is to reach out and help an ever-growing number of people to look behind the veil, and to have a consistent spiritual framework with which to take their own responsibility for trying to make sense of their lives. There are no subscriptions or headquarters, and all communication is via electronic newsletter, email and our lively discussion forum.

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I have little doubt  
that what they  
are glimpsing  
has a genuine,  
objective reality

meditation or via the use of psychedelics, it is probably the most profound experience they ever have. Given the extent to which this is supported by modern scientific theory about the holographic, energetic and conscious nature of everything in the universe – both apparently physical and nonphysical – I have little doubt that what they are glimpsing has a genuine, objective reality, albeit that some of the more detailed aspects of psychedelic experiences are objectively questionable.

Such transcendental experiences of unity are enough to convince many people that it is wrong to think of our souls as individually reincarnating entities. Nevertheless, rational spirituality insists that these two ideas are

not mutually exclusive, but represent a fundamental duality. We are *both* individual reincarnating entities *and* holographic representations of the unified Ultimate Source *all at the same time*.

This leads us into another contentious issue. The key corollary concept to that of reincarnation is that of karma. And the one thing that most reincarnatory approaches, both ancient and modern, are agreed upon is that we reincarnate repeatedly in order to progress our karma sufficiently to break free from the “earthly karmic round”, and to “reunite with the Source”. In other words, to reach the point where we have learnt and experienced everything we can from earthly life, and so no longer need to incarnate in physical form – although souls who have advanced to this stage can of course *volunteer* to come back again to help humankind in general to progress.

But even if they accept the reality of reincarnation, many spiritual seekers who are well versed in more esoteric spiritual mysticism – often prompted by their glimpses of the unity of the universe – still seem to believe that it is possible to escape the karmic round early. In other words, they suggest that in any given life, and without any real knowledge of where we are in terms of karmic advancement over an unknown number of incarnations, any of us can short-cut the process and reunite with the Source after the next physical death by following a variety of practices. Such people might be influenced by, for example, Gnosticism, which is somewhat silent about reincarnation but certainly regards the physical condition as abhorrent and to be escaped from at all costs; or by alchemical ideas of the transformation of the soul, perhaps making enigmatic references to obscure Ancient Egyptian knowledge, whereby they think they can guarantee their passage into the ethereal realms proper, without having to return to the physical plane, by any number of magical spells or incantations; or by eastern mysticism and the essentially Buddhist idea that, because we are not individual souls but all part of one great unity, as soon as we realise this and transcend the ego we are free to reunite with the

Source; or by Jainist and Taoist propositions that if we adopt a disinterested or even wholly ascetic approach we ensure that we generate no more karma – either positive or negative – and again escape the earthly round thereby.

So do any of these ideas hold water? Clearly they are all, as always, predicated on revealed wisdom of one type or another. By contrast there is one final piece of modern evidence that arguably acts as the ultimate source of spiritual wisdom, because it derives from subjects who have been regressed not just into past lives but also into the *interlife between incarnations*. In the seventies and early eighties a number of pioneering psychologists and psychiatrists – operating largely independently in those pre-internet days – stumbled upon this interlife state, and it is the consistency of their subjects' testimony that lends it such weight. And remember again that these are ordinary people, drawn from all walks of life, who do not hold themselves out as spiritual gurus and who have no religious or political axe to grind. Nor is it likely that they were making their reports up from information obtained by normal means, given their often obscure nature and the lack of general publicity that this research received at the time.

In this instance we find that interlife subjects actively rebut the idea of short-cutting the karmic round. They consistently indicate that we are in this for the long haul, and that it is only by experiencing both sides of every coin, and by active engagement in physical life, that we progress sufficiently to escape it. The idea that there are no short-cuts is also suggested by the ultimate question of why, periodically and at the point of the timeless universal cycle that we might refer to as the “Dawn of Brahma” – or “Big Bang” in more modern terms – does the Ultimate Source burst forth into manifestation of the physical and nonphysical realms and all their forms? The best answer I have ever heard for this ultimate question is that the Source wants to *grow by experience*. And since we are all just small holographic representations of this Source, at the same time as being individual souls on our reincarnatory journey, then surely our job is to

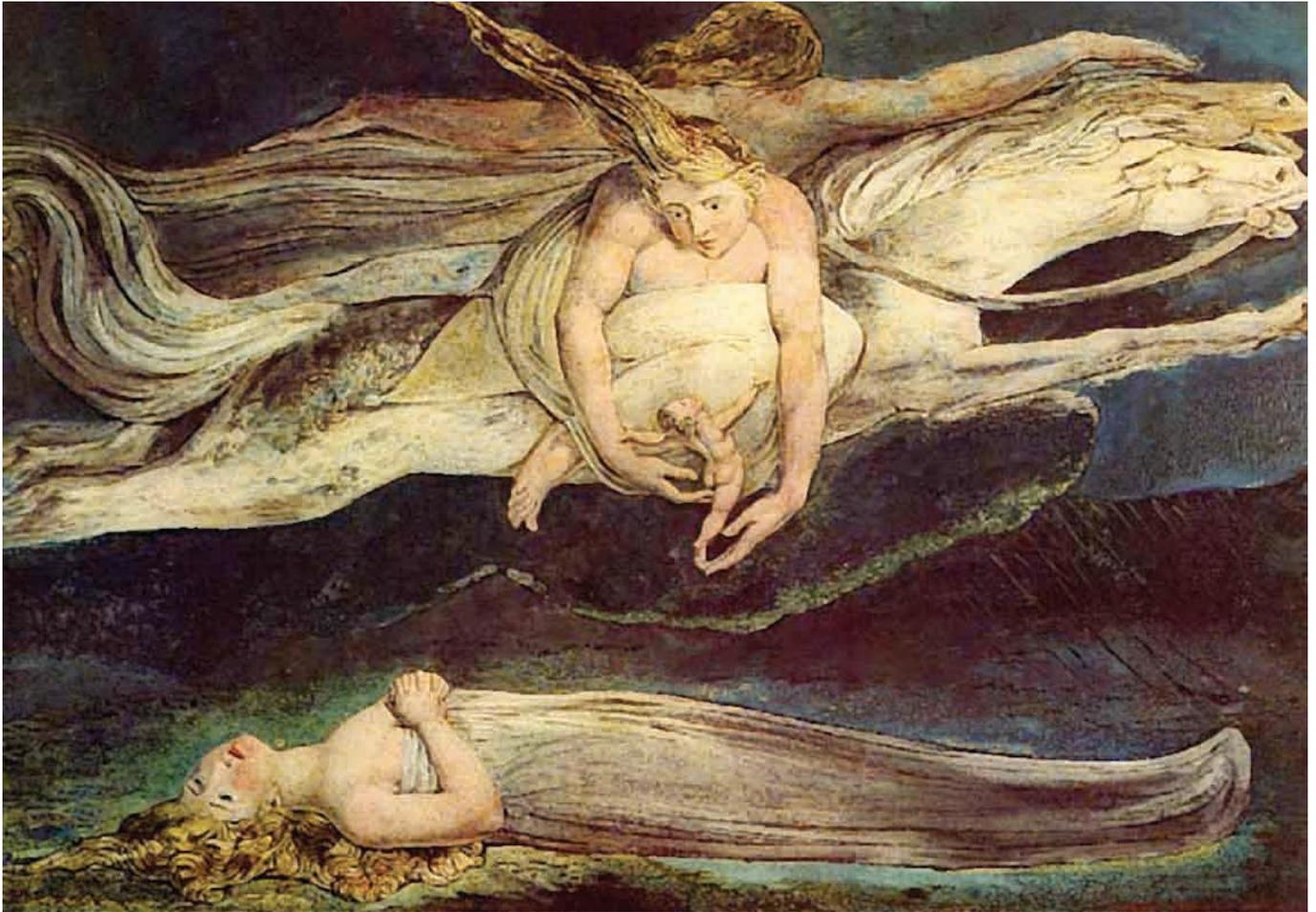
## Interlife subjects actively rebut the idea of short-cutting the karmic round

experience *in full* as well? So, arguably, those who believe in their ability to short-cut the karmic round may be in for something of a shock on their return to the ethereal realms. (Of course, I am well aware that many people engage in alchemical, shamanic, magical, occult and mystical practices not so much to transcend the physical realm as to actively create their own reality, but this is a separate issue that we have no time to consider here.)

### Reuniting With the Source

Interlife regression evidence also forces us to reconsider exactly what we mean by reuniting with the Source, because subjects report that there is a huge, rich and varied amount of activity occurring in the ethereal realms. Souls at different levels of advancement are in training for all kinds of specialist work, from learning to be a spirit guide to other souls, through to training as “intelligent designers” who nudge evolution in certain directions on various inhabited planets throughout the universe by adapting existing blueprints for different environments. And one of our options after escaping the earthly karmic round might be to obtain experience in a different planetary environment – for example, perhaps, a more nonphysical one. The implication seems to be that if you were to ask even a relatively advanced soul who had escaped the earthly karmic round if they had even *experienced* the Ultimate Source properly, let alone *reunited* with it, they would laugh in your face – good naturedly, of course.

This is rather more complex than the relatively simplistic idea in most reincarnatory worldviews – arguably derived from, or at least bolstered by, glimpses of the ultimate unity down the ages – that once we have fin-



ished with earth, the Ultimate Source immediately awaits us. Of course, some esoteric worldviews discuss hierarchies of angels and demons and different layers of heaven and hell and so on, and Qabalism incorporates brave attempts to show that the ethereal realms are many layered. But they tend to represent somewhat rigid and hierarchical approaches, whereas modern interlife regression evidence indicates a much more fluid process with only partially-defined boundaries.

It is also highly pertinent that this modern

We need to  
differentiate between  
what I refer to as  
“progressive” and  
“repetitive” karma

evidence suggests that our perceptions of the ethereal realms are governed by our expectations and cultural conditioning – despite there being a clear and consistent underlying context for these perceptions. So relatively immature souls will tend to hold onto quasi-physical perceptions of their surroundings and of other souls, especially to ease their transition after physical death, whereas more advanced souls will tend to perceive the true nature of these realms and their inhabitants as primarily energy forms. And regression subjects specifically emphasise that perceptions of hellish and demonic realms may occasionally occur, but that these are mere psychic projections of our own individual or collective making, that have no permanence or underlying validity. Of course, I cannot help but point out the implication of this, as controversial as it may be, which is that many of our historical esoteric gurus who supposedly glimpsed and then described these realms while in incarnate trance

were almost certainly allowing their own subjective expectations and cultural conditioning to provide them with perceptions that had little or no underlying validity. Moreover, they may have been completely unable to distinguish between experiences of the purely astral as opposed to properly ethereal realms.

### The Real Dynamics of Karma

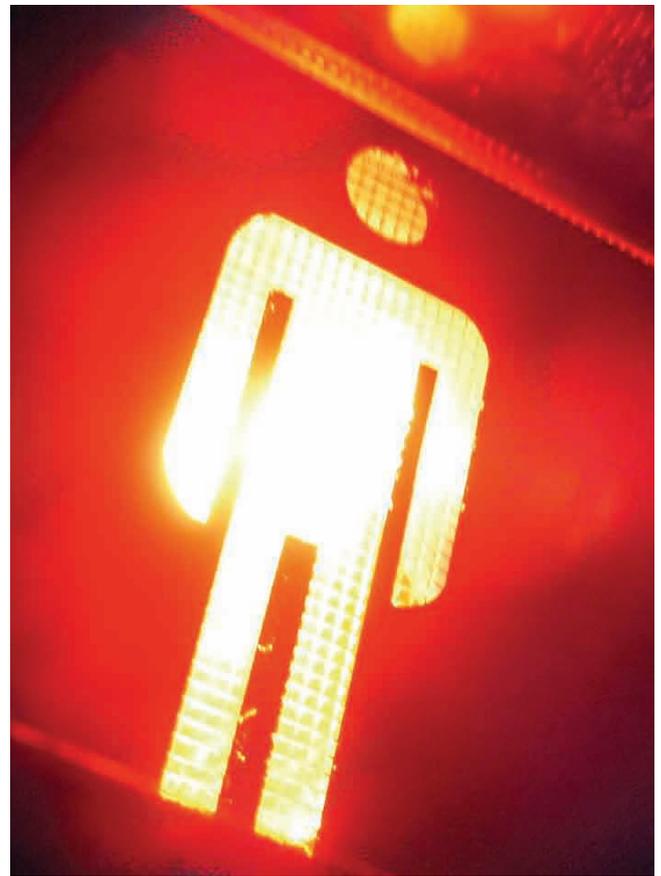
Let us now come back down to earth somewhat, and consider what all this means for the way we approach our everyday lives. What does karmic advancement really mean, and how do we go about achieving it?

It is an unavoidable fact that most historical notions of karma have involved the idea of “action and reaction”, whether this be in the gentle form of “you reap what you sow” or the harsher form of “punishment” for past misdemeanours. Indeed, the influence of this view remains so strong that even most past-life therapists still cling to it in one form or another – even when the evidence in front of them directly contradicts it. So, for example, we find that some therapeutic case studies of past-life regression reveal a succession of horrible lives involving murder and other horrific experiences in which the subject does not alternate between being victim and perpetrator, but is consistently the innocent *victim*. How can this represent a process of action and reaction?

If we return to Stevenson’s cases of birthmarks and defects, again they provide crucial evidence in this area, even though he himself has been unable to pontificate on their karmic significance in order to protect his professional reputation. But I am under no such constraints, so can ask the obvious question. How can some sort of process of action and reaction leave the children in these cases with what appears to be a physical *punishment* in their current life when they were usually quite innocent *victims* in their previous one? Of course, it cannot. In fact, therapists have long realised that the primary causes of subjects retaining physical or other reminders of a past-life trauma in their current life are *strong*

*unresolved emotions* of hatred, fear, jealousy, revenge and so on. In Stevenson’s cases, these emotions are so strong and unresolved that they are accompanied by a physical imprint. But what, then, is the real karmic context?

To understand this, we need to differentiate between what I refer to as “progressive” and “repetitive” karma. In fact, this has many similarities with the Hindu concepts of “dharma” and karma, but I believe this traditional analysis still contains some fundamental flaws. Modern interlife research shows that more advanced souls not only conduct detailed reviews of their past lives, but also actively *choose*



Karma and karmic progression is all about learning, and experiencing both sides of every coin

and *plan* their next ones. And even when they choose adverse circumstances such as physical disability or financial or emotional deprivation, they do so to *progress* their karma as part of a *learning* experience. But this research also shows that less advanced souls often ignore all the review and planning advice available to them in the interlife – merely “sleeping”, or hurrying back with no real plan – and as a result their lives tend to exhibit *repetitive* patterns. However, even when as a result they repeatedly face adverse circumstances, it is to give them another opportunity to *learn* the lesson that has escaped them in the past – and *not* because of some sort of karmic punishment, or dynamic of action and reaction. And the most crucial test for those stuck in a repetitive rut is to learn to properly assimilate their strong negative emotions – either during incarnate life, or by recognising and properly utilising the assistance available to them in the interlife – so that they no longer hold their restrictive karmic charge.

So my strongest conclusion from an analysis of the modern evidence is that karma and karmic progression is all about learning, and experiencing both sides of every coin. There is no karmic “law” of action and reaction. Indeed, to the extent that this idea allows people to hide behind a veil of determinism instead of recognising their full responsibility for making their own karmic choices, this aspect of the revealed wisdom of the past is not just misleading but positively harmful. At the very least, instead of worrying about how our past actions and intentions may be influencing the present, we should be concentrating on how our current actions and intentions will affect our future. And the key will be for us to balance and moderate our reactions and emotions to all circumstances, whether supposedly good or bad; to forgive ourselves and others; to try to understand the lessons arising from any set of circumstances, and why we might have chosen them; and to use our intuition to try to make the right decisions to keep us on our chosen life path. Above all, of course, we need to recognise that material power, status and wealth are conclusively *not* indicators of

karmic progression.

I would suggest – albeit with some humility, and some reservations about making sure we avoid the mistakes of the past – that if we want to launch a genuine and far-reaching new age revolution, and to change the world, we would do well to pull together behind this new rational spiritual framework. A framework based not on the revealed wisdom of the past and its questionable philosophies and motivations, but on consistent modern evidence from a whole plethora of ordinary people who, I emphasise again, have no political or religious axe to grind, and no pretensions as prophets or gurus. Rational spirituality can not only unite existing spiritual seekers, but also attract new ones into the fold as the supposedly rational doctrine of materialism is increasingly laid bare as an illogical nonsense. Above all, it gives us a chance to seize our proper birthright, and to take humanity forwards into a brighter future.

## Profile

Ian Lawton is a full-time writer-researcher specialising in ancient history, esoterica and spiritual philosophy. His first two books, *Giza: The Truth* (1999) and *Genesis Unveiled* (2003) were published by Virgin and have sold over 30,000 copies worldwide. Through them he has gained a considerable reputation for adopting a scholarly and logical approach even to the spiritual aspects of his research. In 2004 he published his third book, *The Book of the Soul: Rational Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century*, which is available direct from his website at [www.ianlawton.com](http://www.ianlawton.com) or via Amazon UK, and contains details of the majority of the evidence and analysis presented here. In 2005 he founded the Rational Spirituality Movement, details of which are available at [www.rsmovement.org](http://www.rsmovement.org).  URL

# Wisdom-To-Go



Go face to face with  
the greatest thinkers of our time.

# Ian Stevenson: An Old Soul



Dr Ian Stevenson studied medicine at the University of St Andrews in Scotland, transferring to McGill University in Montreal after the outbreak of World War II. His studies in medicine and biochemistry led to an interest in psychosomatic illnesses (although his mother should also be credited, as Stevenson once said “my mother had believed strongly in the influence of thoughts on psychological well-being, and I may owe to her my initial interest”). It was largely this research which prompted Stevenson to abandon his reductionist philosophy, and it showed him the degree to which modern science has unnecessarily ignored ancient knowledge:

*In these researches we thought of ourselves as pioneers, but we could not long sustain this view unless we stopped reading and also forgot what we had already read. Solomon has said in Proverbs: “A merry heart doeth good like medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.” References to what we call psychosomatic medicine occur frequently in Shakespeare and in many other writers outside the medical profession . . . what needs emphasis is not the frequency of references to the effect of the mind on the body, but the acceptance without question through centuries of this relationship. Doubts and neglect of this knowledge came later, at least within the medical profession, with the discovery of the role of microorganisms in disease . . . it was the middle of this century before physicians discovered again the power of the mind on the body.*

When the prospect of permanent employment

“Knowledge in science,  
as Whitehead said,  
keeps like a fish”

in the field of psychosomatic medicine began to look distant, Stevenson began studying psychiatry as a means to continue with his interest in the effects of mental states on the body. As a part of his studies into psychoanalysis, he began experimenting with psychedelic drugs such as LSD and mescaline (remembering that in the 1950s, these were still legal and many people thought there was great promise in therapy using these drugs). While offering caution about the conditions under which one administers psychedelics, Stevenson said “they increased my conviction of the dual nature of mind and body.”

However, Stevenson’s distaste of reductionism in scientific and medical circles was followed now by his annoyance at the importance given to Freud’s theories in psychiatry, at the expense of practically every other idea. Stevenson conveyed the problem with a short quote: “where all men think alike, few men think at all.” Some might say that line has been a driving force for Stevenson throughout his life, from the psychosomatic research, to his experimentation with hallucinogens, and his departure from the ‘orthodox’ theories of Freud – but most significantly, in the research he was about to undertake . . . into the evidence for reincarnation.

Stevenson has had a life-long interest in parapsychology, and had been familiar with the con-

*Can you imagine dedicating more than four decades of your life to investigating a subject, only to have your work ignored, even ridiculed, by your peers? Would it be frustrating? Take that a step further, and imagine if those four decades of research had in fact resulted in a solid amount of evidence for an existence of the ‘soul’ after physical death, in the form of reincarnation. You might wonder how it is that your work, of such obvious importance, could slip through the cracks of a world enamored with ‘reality’ television, plastic music and ‘celebrity scientists’. Such is the lot of Dr Ian Stevenson, Director of the Division of Personality Studies at the University of Virginia. Born in Canada in 1918, the now 87-year-old researcher has devoted more than half of his life to investigating reports from individuals of past-life memories – and has continued to do so, at a pace that would make someone half his age weary.*

cept of reincarnation since childhood. In 1960, he published an essay in the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, reporting his observations on the history of research into reincarnation. This investigation brought to the fore such ideas as the now well-known fact that the majority of persons claiming to remember past lives are children, and that these memories generally disappear between ages 5 to 8. Concluding his essay, Stevenson recommended that further research be undertaken to evaluate the claims made by children of past lives, pointing out that . . .

*. . . in mediumistic communications we have the problem of proving that someone clearly dead still lives. In evaluating apparent memories of former incarnations, the problem consists in judging*



*. . . in mediumistic communications we have the problem of proving that someone clearly dead still lives*

*“I soon found that the cases were much more numerous than I had been led to expect”*

*whether someone clearly living once died. This may prove the easier task.*

His essay won him a prize from the American SPR, and garnered much attention concerning the idea of collecting evidence for reincarnation. Even so, Stevenson said “I do not think it occurred to me then that I would be the person to undertake the task”. However, Eileen Garrett – the founder of Parapsychology Foundation – personally requested that he go to India to investigate an alleged reincarnation case she had heard about. Despite undergoing a severe case of culture shock, Stevenson’s voyage to India and Sri Lanka turned up a surprising fact: “I soon found that the cases were much more numerous than I had been led to expect from the scattered reports I had summarized for my essay.”

Subsequent visits to the subcontinent continued to turn up more cases, demanding Stevenson’s full-time attention. In a stroke of fortune, at this time a wealthy benefactor came forward. Chester Carlson, the inventor of xerography, began to offer funds to help pay for his research. Later, he then offered matching funds for an endowed chair at the University of Virginia which enabled Stevenson to devote himself full-time to the research – a decision which he says he has never regretted.

Since that time, Ian Stevenson has traveled the globe – he has investigated cases in India, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Brazil, Turkey, Thailand, Europe and North America. He and his team have more than 2600 investigated cases on their books – though he is quick to point out that they are of varying quality and thoroughness. This is what makes Stevenson stand out from most other researchers of ‘fringe’ topics: his scientific professionalism. He avoids any sort of ‘hyping’ of his data, going as far as to say:

All the cases I've investigated so far have shortcomings. Even taken together, they do not offer anything like proof. But as the body of evidence accumulates, it's more likely that more and more people will see its relevance.

Nevertheless, Stevenson does say "I think a rational person, if he wants, can believe in reincarnation on the basis of evidence". This is no doubt due to the convincing nature of some of his cases. Take the case of Swarnlata Mishra, born in India in 1948. Not long after turning three years old, she began suggesting that she lived at a different address and with a different family. On the basis of the information she provided, Stevenson was able to track down this 'previous life'. What's more, she then provided more than 50 specific facts about this person which were verified by the 'former' family. In particular, she identified members of the family from a large group of visitors, and even her 'son' despite him protesting for more than a day that he was not.

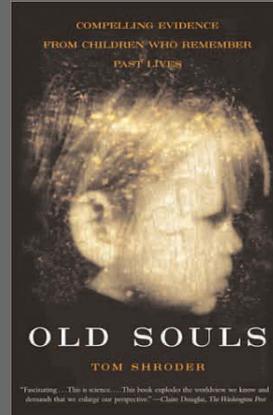
Apart from simply elucidating cases of reincarnation, Stevenson's research has also provided some recurrent features. These include:

- Most past lives are recalled by children between the ages of 2 and 8, and forgotten after this point.
- Often 'announcing dreams' occur, in which the deceased tells someone in the family they are about to be reborn to them.
- There is a high incidence of violent death in the persons whose lives are remembered.
- That birthmarks can occur which correspond closely in size and location with a wound causing

"I think a rational person, if he wants, can believe in reincarnation on the basis of evidence"

## In-depth Reading:

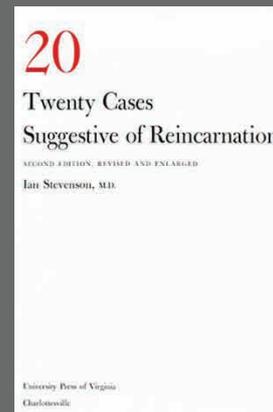
*Old Souls*, by Tom Shroder



Amazon US: [URL](#)

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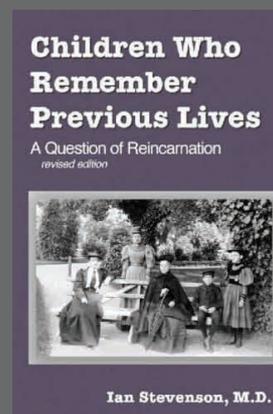
*Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*, by Dr Ian Stevenson



Amazon US: [URL](#)

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*Children Who Remember Past Lives*, by Dr Ian Stevenson



Amazon US: [URL](#)

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death in the previous life.

It is this final point which perhaps gives Dr Ian Stevenson's research some much-needed evidential clout. Much of his more recent research has focused on identifying injuries in the claimed past life which match up to

birthmarks and birth defects on the claimant, even going back through autopsy records in order to ensure maximum evidence is available for the claims. Of these cases, he says they "provide the strongest evidence we have so far in favor of reincarnation." [see <http://www.childpastlives.org/birthmrk.htm>  URL for an

## Notable Quotes From Dr Ian Stevenson:

"Knowledge in science, as Whitehead said, keeps like a fish"

"For me everything now believed by scientists is open to question, and I am always dismayed to find that many scientists accept current knowledge as fixed forever"

"I can also believe that in mystical experiences we may have direct access to important truths or, more specifically, to the most important truth of all, which is that we ourselves are part of a Great All"

"Freud now appears to me to have been an emperor without clothes, and I am less surprised that he developed the concepts he espoused than that he succeeded in persuading so many persons to accept them"

"Everyone wants a case in Iowa. Well, I'll give them a case in Iowa. They aren't as strong as the Lebanese cases, but they do exist."

"It seems to me that it's far better to be 90 percent certain of something important than 100 percent certain of something that is trivial."

"In my experience, nearly all so-called previous personalities evoked through hypnosis are entirely imaginary and a result of the patient's eagerness to obey the hypnotist's suggestion . . . I'm not saying that hyp-

nosis is never a useful tool, but I do deplore the commercial exploitation and misleading claims that are often made."

"My idea of God is that He is evolving. I don't believe in the watchmaker God, the original creator who built the watch and then lets it tick. I believe in a "self-maker God" who is evolving and experimenting; so are we as parts of Him."

"Precognition is just a clearer idea of a possible future. Imagine a person in a canoe paddling down a river. Around the corner are rapids he doesn't see. Someone on the cliff above, seeing the whole river, can see what's likely to happen to that person."

"I have concentrated most of my effort in examining the evidence for the survival of human personality after death. I have studied and written reports on apparitions, the visions of dying persons and of persons recovered from near death, and to certain types of mediumistic communications. The evidence that I have found most promising has been that provided by children who claim to remember past lives."

"What was more distressing was that other people, instead of coming to me and saying, "I'd like to see your data," would make cracks to her at cocktail parties in my absence, tease her, and I thought that was shameful..." (on his late wife)

There's a saying,  
"Science only  
changes one funeral  
at a time."

essay by Stevenson on this. ]

Other convincing cases uncovered by Stevenson involve *xenoglossy*, the ability to speak a language never learned (in this life at least), combined with evidential memories of times long past.

Stevenson's dedication to his work has continued through the decades, despite complaints from his University alumni concerning the nature of his research, and even pleas from his wife to not ruin a promising career. Most people profess their amazement at the energy he devotes to the research – when journalist Tom Schroder traveled with him during the writing of his book *Old Souls: The Scientific Evidence for Reincarnation*, he could barely keep pace:

*Even though he was on the eve of turning 80, his stamina was astounding. Ranging far outside the cities in both Lebanon and India, relentlessly logging 12-hour days seven days a week in often inhospitable environments, he rarely betrayed the slightest fatigue. It was all I could do to keep from begging him to take a break.*

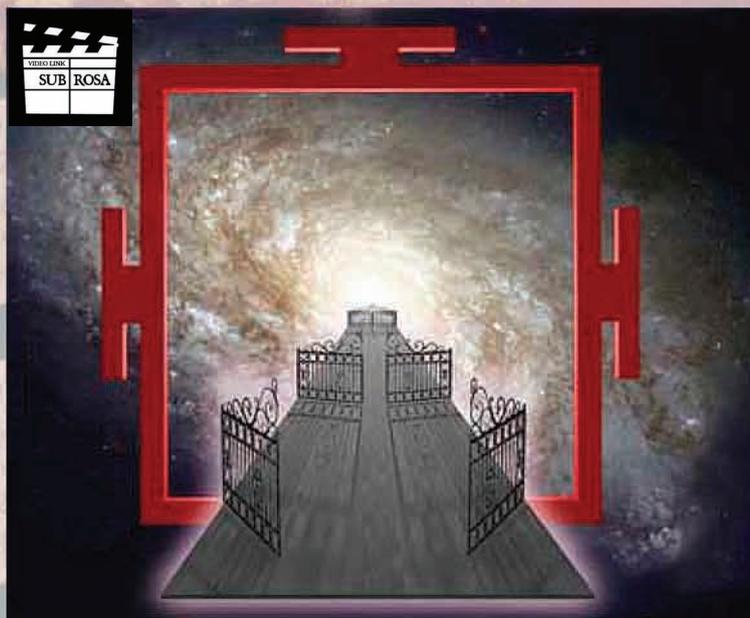
However, Stevenson is under no illusions as to the chances of his work being recognised by mainstream science before his advanced years catch up with him. On being questioned by Shroder on this, he dryly noted:

*There's a saying, "Science only changes one funeral at a time."*

Nevertheless, inroads are being made, and perhaps one day his contribution will receive the respect it deserves. In the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, Dr Harold Lief wrote of Ian Stevenson: "Either he is making a colossal mistake, or he will be known as the Galileo of the twentieth century."

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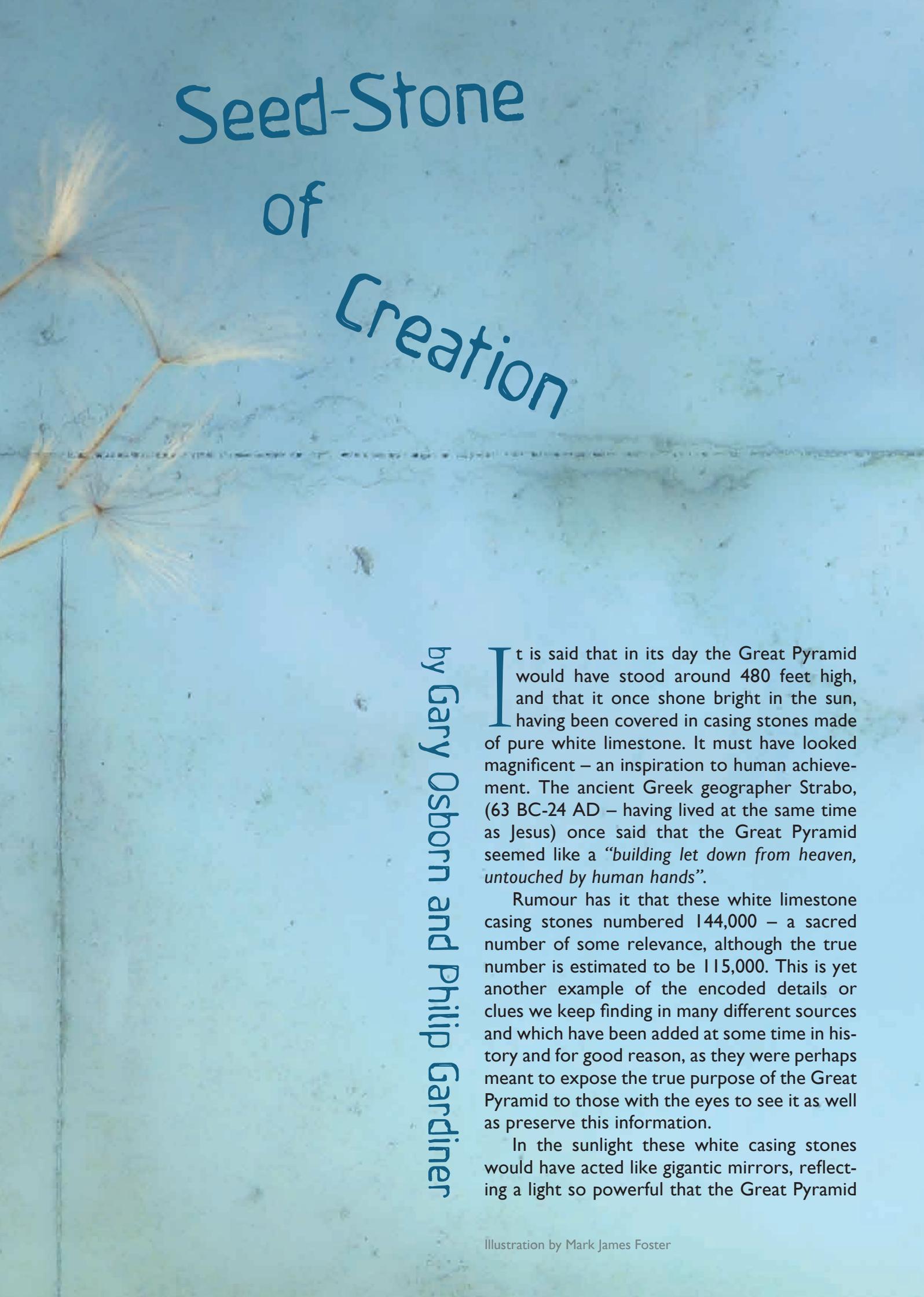
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# The Great Pyramid



A dandelion seed head is positioned on the left side of the page, with its stem and several seeds extending towards the center. The background is a light blue, textured surface.

# Seed-Stone of Creation

by Gary Osborn and Philip Gardiner

It is said that in its day the Great Pyramid would have stood around 480 feet high, and that it once shone bright in the sun, having been covered in casing stones made of pure white limestone. It must have looked magnificent – an inspiration to human achievement. The ancient Greek geographer Strabo, (63 BC-24 AD – having lived at the same time as Jesus) once said that the Great Pyramid seemed like a “*building let down from heaven, untouched by human hands*”.

Rumour has it that these white limestone casing stones numbered 144,000 – a sacred number of some relevance, although the true number is estimated to be 115,000. This is yet another example of the encoded details or clues we keep finding in many different sources and which have been added at some time in history and for good reason, as they were perhaps meant to expose the true purpose of the Great Pyramid to those with the eyes to see it as well as preserve this information.

In the sunlight these white casing stones would have acted like gigantic mirrors, reflecting a light so powerful that the Great Pyramid

“would have been visible from the moon as a shining star on earth” (according to Great Pyramid of Giza Research Association). No wonder the ancient Egyptians named the Great Pyramid *Khut*, meaning ‘Light’, or *Ikhet*, the “Glorious Light” or “Shining One”.

However, it is said that this idyllic vision has been robbed from us in more recent times by the Arabs of the region, who in 1356 began dismantling its casing stones to build the temples and mosques in the surrounding city of Cairo, which had been partly destroyed by an earthquake in 1301 AD. Reports say that not only were the casing stones removed, but the men even tried to dismantle the pyramid itself from

the apex down. However, after realising the impossible task set before them, we are told that they abandoned the project.

Although coarse and uneven, the summit is a convenient viewpoint for those who decide (and are allowed) to climb its 203 courses or steps (originally 210) – each of which are 3-ft high or more. To the ancient Egyptians, the capstone or pyramidion of a pyramid or phallic-shaped obelisk (really a raised-up pyramid) signified the apex or pinnacle of their beliefs in more ways than one.

### The Seed of Creation

Out of all the ‘Creation’ myths of the ancient Egyptians, the ‘Heliopolitan’ version (named after the city of Heliopolis) is the most popular. It is said that in the beginning, the universe was a “formless, watery void” named *Nu* or *Nun*. The English word ‘None’ – meaning “nothing” or “zero” may be a derivative of this ancient name.

Out of the waters of *Nun* emerged a phallic-shaped hill – the ‘primeval mound’. This hill or

To the ancient Egyptians, the capstone or pyramidion signified the apex or pinnacle of their beliefs



Pyramidion from Amenemhat III's Pyramid at Dashour (Photograph © Jon Bodsworth [www.egyptarchive.co.uk](http://www.egyptarchive.co.uk))

## This mythical act of creation is similar to the creation of the universe as told by modern physicists

mound is a metaphor for a vortex of energy – a circular matrix *created from its own centre*. This creation myth is the origin of the ancient Egyptian Sun symbol – a simple circle with a dot.

Some traditions hold to the idea that the waters of *Nun* surround this ‘hill’ or ‘mound’ – being the first ‘world mountain.’ However, it would be more correct to say that the “waters” (the potential energy) of *Nun* is at the very centre of the mound – like the lava at the centre of a volcano – being the centre of all creation.

Here, the confusing concept of the ‘World Mountain’ can be further explained in that an analogy was made with the “liquid-fire” (lava) that rises up from the depths or centre of the earth and through a mountain volcano so as to explode in all directions from the truncated summit – note that the Great Pyramid is also truncated. The inherent sexual imagery was not lost on those who noticed the correspondence between the lava rising upward through the axis of the volcano, the Kundalini *prana* energy – the mix of ‘fire’ and ‘water’ – rising up through the *sushumna* of the spine, and the semen, which rises up through the phallus at the climactic moment of sexual intercourse between male and female subjects – again the opposites.

In Hindu cosmology, this ancient Egyptian imagery of the energy rising up through the phallus of Atum-Ra and surrounded by the “waters” – the matrix of space – would be interpreted as the male Lingam (erect penis) surrounded by the female Yoni (vagina). It is said that from this union of Lingam and Yoni, the whole universe comes into being. And this would be correct as the sexual act reflects the fusion of opposites; the same mechanistic process that goes on within one’s consciousness and also at the

microcosmic levels of reality; the “seeds” from which all things are being continually created and recreated.

In the Egyptian creation myth, it was from this phallic hill, that Atum-Ra, by enfolding his hand around his penis (again demonstrating the union of opposites) *masturbated* himself to an



Reconsecrated Egyptian obelisk (Photograph © Philip Gardiner)

explosive orgasm – his seed igniting the birth of the Universe and creating all life within it. From this fusion point, the Universe expanded in all complexity – unfolding like a flower through many levels. In the minds of the ancients, this was how the material world became manifest.

This mythical act of creation is similar to the creation of the universe as told by modern physicists – the popular “Big Bang” theory. This theory holds that the Universe was seeded into life from a ‘point of singularity’ – the proto-atom (Atum) of potential energy/information, which exploded its contents outwards and in all directions.

As the matrix of the Universe expanded, there appeared within it, similar ‘points of singularity’ – the centres of the vortices we call atoms and subatomic particles from which all manner of complex patterns of creation are blinking into and out of existence. At another level there are also the blackhole/whitehole vortices, known by our astrophysicists as ‘su-

## The meteorites that fell to earth were believed to be semen droplets of the Creator

permissive blackholes’ – around which swirl the galaxies of suns and from which they are being both created and destroyed.

Like the *Tao* of Chinese tradition, Atum-Ra was the *neter* (nature) or ‘neuter’ (neutral) – an Androgynous figure – neither male nor female, but encompassing both opposites and their principles. However, to many Atum was also known as a male god, and immediately after this burst of creation, from his phallus – which in most esoteric traditions also doubles as the spinal column – two opposite beings – the god Shu and the female goddess Tefnut emerge. Shu is the ‘active force’ in the universe – the ‘male principle,’ which makes things happen, and Tefnut is the ‘female principle,’ which limits, regulates, controls and directs the male energy. Tefnut is also known as *Maat* or *Ma’at* – the goddess of justice and judgement, who is also the risen Kundalini goddess of wisdom. This would mean that the Kundalini experience is associated with one’s own judgement, in that having this experience, and successfully all the way to its climax, one is ensured a place in heaven.

## The Great Pyramid

The Great Pyramid is a splendid example of the shamanic world mountain or the primordial mound of creation. The capstone of the pyramid which was also placed at the apex of columns and obelisks, representing the shamanic ‘world pillar’, was called the *Benben* and represented the ‘seed-point’ of creation. In other words, the pillar or obelisk represented the phallus of the supreme god Atum-Ra, who personified the source-centre of the cosmos and all of creation – the *Benben* on top representing the sperm



Reconsacrated Egyptian obelisk (Photograph © Philip Gardiner)

or 'seed-droplet' which seeded this creation.

We have here a reference to the 'zero-point', because that's just what the pinpoint apex of the pyramid symbolises. We also see in this interpretation, the 'proto-atom' of the cosmos – i.e., zero-time, and just before the "big bang", as conceptualised by our modern-day physicists. Some say that the pyramid was capped by a gold-plated Benben pyramidion while others say that the capstone was of pure black onyx, or possibly even a quartz crystal or meteorite. There is logic behind the last suggestion.

The meteorites that fell to earth were believed to be semen droplets of the Creator; deposits from Atum-Ra's own creation of the universe. It is said that the meteorites that were observed falling, and the ones discovered – some of which were conically shaped (pyramidion) due to the friction caused by the earth's atmosphere – provided evidence for this belief.

Both the Benben stone and its related archetypal creature, the *bennu* bird, (a Heron) which is often depicted perched on top of the capstone of an obelisk ('sacred pillar' – shamanic), also represented the 'soul', the 'divine spark' or 'life force' that is said to reside in

every man and woman and inside the centre of the skull – hence the placement of the Benben on top of the column, obelisk or pyramid which represented the human spine and body. To the ancient Egyptians the soul was known as the *ba* – which they believed was one's own link to the source or Godhead known as the *Akh*. Note that among the Pyramid Texts are the 'glorifications' – the *sabu* (associated with the star constellation of Orion) which makes one into an *Akh*. The 'Akh' is the ancient Egyptian term for the 'spiritual centre' or 'source of creation' – i.e., zero-point – so *Akh* is the highest point or centre reached and it is reached via the *ba* – the soul.

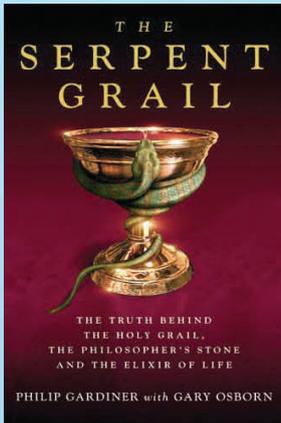
The Biblical 'dove' is also symbolic of the soul, but more importantly, according to the Egyptians it was believed that the soul – the 'life force' that sustains our very existence – was given to us by the Creator Atum-Ra, who represents the *Akh* and is equatable with the Sumerian god *Anu*. Its interesting that scientists now have evidence that falling meteorites, and particularly iron meteorites, played an important part in the evolution of life on earth. Keeping with these philosophical thoughts, one could interpret this to mean that like an egg, the earth, had been seeded, or *infused* with the



Glass pyramid at the Louvre, Paris (Photograph © Philip Gardiner)

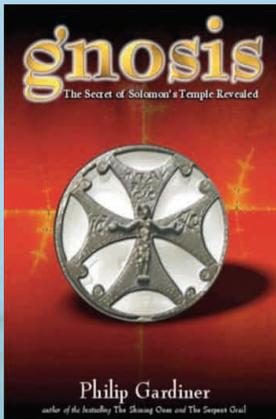
Some books by Philip Gardner and Gary Osborn:

*The Serpent Grail: The Truth Behind the Holy Grail, the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life*



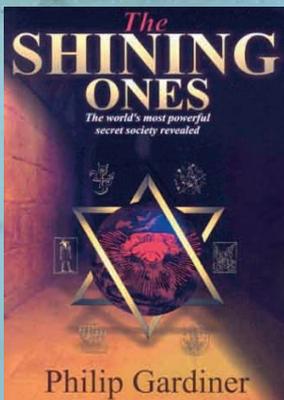
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soul of the Akh Creator – the life-force, the same force or energy which is evident in the shining stars.

Furthermore, the bennu bird is also the Phoenix – the sacred bird of rebirth and resurrection. This suggests that the ancient Egyptians, or a people from whom these mythical creature-archetypes, symbols and metaphors were perhaps borrowed or inherited – also believed in reincarnation: that all things go around in cycles and that although the physical vehicle may be discarded and changed, the soul or ‘divine spark’ of the universe which reincarnates – becoming immersed in matter – belongs to the Creator, to which everything is linked, and is immortal and indestructible.

We would say that the Great Pyramid represents this indestructible ‘divine spark’ – perhaps the ‘stone’ that fell from heaven – immersed as it is in the material world as the zero-point – the seed-stone and point of creation itself.

The Capstone

Many are perplexed as to the reasons why the Great Pyramid might have been built without being capped – after all it’s a little unsettling that a building like that could remain purposefully unfinished. An early reference to the missing capstone comes from Diodorus Siculus – who claims to have visited the Giza complex and saw the Great Pyramid with its casing stones intact. He wrote that the structure was “complete and without the least decay, and yet it lacked its apex stone”.

This is interesting because how could the capstone have been dismantled without first demolishing the smooth casing-stones so that one could approach it by stepping on the course core-masonry that lay underneath? This statement by Diodorus is used as evidence that the capstone had never been added to the structure – and this is now the emerging consensus view: that the Great Pyramid never had a capstone placed on it – which indeed contradicts the ancient Egyptian veneration of the Benben – and that it remained unfinished and perhaps for a more profound symbolic reason: perhaps something to do with the fact that most of us

There seems to be a “knowledge” reserved for the general masses and another kind of knowledge for those who are “in the know”

are unconscious of this ‘divine spark’ within us and therefore our own spirituality and immortality. This explanation of ours may have some light shed on it by the following quote by author Peter Lemesurier, in his book *The Great Pyramid Decoded*:

*There is some evidence in the ancient texts that the eventual addition of the capstone (and thus the completion of the pyramid to its full design) was seen by the initiates as symbolising the return of the Light to the world in the Messianic person of the resurrected Osiris’.*

There is more to this explanation or theory which we will reveal in books yet to be published – suffice to say, that ancient Egyptian imagery – i.e., obelisks and truncated pyramids – are endemic in Masonic symbolism, and this posits a nagging question which has not been satisfactorily answered – if at all asked:

If the Great Pyramid and other pyramids are merely ‘tombs, and tombs only’, as many an orthodox historian or Egyptologist would be quick to inform us, then why does all this emblematic imagery exist? This symbolism belongs not only to the many secret societies, but also to many mystery schools of the esoteric. Surely such imagery hints at a vast secret associated with the Great Pyramid? A profound secret that has been hiding behind the ‘smokescreen cover’ of it being a tomb or burial mound?

And what is this secret? Take the symbolic location of the glass pyramid in Paris: was the glass pyramid built and placed on the former Paris ‘zero-point’ meridian meant to silently refer to this secret and/or perhaps immortalise it? Again, only those with the eyes to see it

would benefit surely.

It is indeed a strange world when we consider that many of us would rather continue to accept or believe without question, the rather mundane explanations given by mainstream Egyptologists and historians, while at the same time ignoring the fact that there are also many mystifying symbols, signs, secret codes, secret messages, in text, art and architecture both ancient and modern, which seem to be conveying a far greater purpose given to the pyramids – and most notably, the Great Pyramid of Giza.

Given these facts, the reader will appreciate, that there seems to be a “knowledge” reserved for the general masses and another kind of knowledge for those who are “in the know”, and those who have earned their ‘right to know’ by being able to read the hidden clues in the symbolic language. But to be able to read these clues and pointers, one must first become aware of; acknowledge and understand the reality of an extraordinary and rare phenomenon regarding the human mind and the physical body – a phenomenon we can all experience, and this experience is exemplified in the conception of the *Benben* – the apex of the

(Photograph © Jon Bodsworth [www.egyptarchive.co.uk](http://www.egyptarchive.co.uk))



## Over time, an ancient shamanic culture had developed into a 'cosmological system'

pyramid and what it really signifies.

The Benben is the zero-point; *the non-local, non-dimensional* nature of the source consciousness within us and from which the information patterns of one's own reality are created and projected outwards like the spokes radiating from the hub of a wheel. Our theory that the tip of the missing capstone represents the zero-point of creation is supported by the following:

It's a fact that Quartz grows in a particular geometric pattern, as do all crystals. And it's a fact that quartz grows in the form of a triangle or pyramid with an angle of 51.43 degrees – the same as the sloping sides of the Great Pyramid.

Quartz crystal begins its life deep within the earth from hot vapour, which is a supersaturated solution of silicon dioxide. As it cools a unit cell of quartz forms around a nucleating site (seed) in the same way that an oyster forms. The quartz is the matrix created around a seed point. The forming atoms that are bonding together to create the crystal are laid down where there is most energy – the molecules adhering to the base silicon matrix. Made up as a tetrahedron shaped molecule, it is now composed of four atoms of oxygen with one silicon atom suspended within. This primary cell unit now attracts other silicon dioxide molecules and over time trillions of these cells link together in a spiralling motion, layer upon layer until the crystal is made. The crystal is a known quantum converter that is able to transmit energy in a magnified state and this energy can easily be absorbed or received by biological matter – such as the human body. 90% of granite is quartz – and the walls of the Kings Chamber are made out of blocks of granite.

Its possible then that the King's Chamber was a place of initiation, where the adept sha-

man, god-king-priest, would go into trance to initiate out of body experiences – the flight of the *ba* or soul, and ultimately the enlightenment experience known by the Hindus as *Kundalini*, and by which the shaman accessed the *Akh* – the source-centre of creation – and at the climax of enlightenment.

Our own conclusion is, that it is from this experience – one's awakening to this source – that the profound knowledge still being preserved by various secret societies, was first derived, and which over time, an ancient shamanic culture had developed into a 'cosmological system'. We are now certain that this knowledge is summarised in the layout and symbolic location of Giza and the architectural design of the Great Pyramid, which also contains encoded information about the geophysics of the earth and acts as a precessional clock to determine the cycles of reality within which it was believed man is trapped. The shaman sought to find a way in which to escape these cycles through trance and these altered state experiences.

The reality of this is supplemented by the associative information that has been encoded worldwide in ancient texts, myths, art, and even our contemporary architecture – and therefore we are looking at the ultimate code which some have tried to conceal and suppress – the official 'tomb explanation', as taught in schools,



Symbol of endless serpent, from Masonic Qabalah

“The real treasure is not always what’s inside the box but is the box itself”

being part of this agenda.

Anything that contains important information which is not instantly recognisable on the surface can be considered to be a retainer of a code or cipher, and we can be sure that this is what the Great Pyramid is in structure.

As described by our friend, the writer and esotericist Anneke Koremans, the pyramids and all temples for that matter are like cupboards or

boxes: “The real treasure is not always what’s inside the box but is the box itself”.

After looking briefly at just some of the conclusions given and questions posed in this essay, no one can really doubt that the amount of information that can be gained from closely studying the Great Pyramid and its location – even if much of this information was *intentionally* encoded or not – is indeed so mind-boggling, that one could be forgiven for thinking that ‘God’ or some ‘higher intelligence’ not constrained by the laws of our reality had built it, saying: “There you are, all the information you need to know about you and your reality is all stored within this monument – find it and use it!” . . .

## Profile

Philip Gardner has been described variously as – the anti-Christ, the Devil incarnate, a seeker after truth, shocking, the most interesting interviewee ever, challenging, controversial, the new Salman Rushdie and was even banned from the United Arab Emirates. Philip is married with two children and lives in the heart of Robin Hood country in England. He has a Masters Degree in Strategic Marketing and nine diplomas ranging from Personnel Management through to Holistic Medicine and the craft of Etymology.

Before retiring to dedicate his time to researching and writing, Philip was a Marketing Director and owner of a company in the UK. Part of this role included giving lectures on the art and history of marketing and propaganda to various organisations including certain government bodies and companies. Philip began his writing career with a book entitled *Proof? Does God Exist?* Published in 2002 and followed this up with his best-selling *The Shining Ones: The World’s Most Powerful Secret Society Revealed*, which launched in the UK and immediately outsold. His latest book is *Gnosis: The Secret of Solomon’s Temple Re-*

*vealed*. For more information, see Philip’s personal website which links to the official websites for each book [<http://www.philipgardiner.net/>]  URI

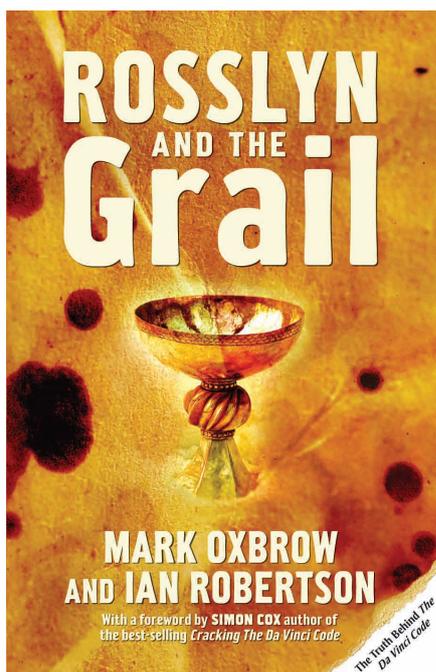
Gary Osborn has been a writer on mysticism and esoteric traditions for over ten years. He once worked for the Daily Mail newspaper and has been involved with the media-film industry before managing a family business – a graphic-design and screen-printing printing company which specialised in both designing and creating custom-made studio equipment for various internationally-known recording artists.

Gary’s interests range from history, science and technology, quantum physics, philosophy, psychology and popular culture to metaphysics and esoteric subjects.

He has co-written various articles for Shaman’s Drum magazine covering subjects related to Ancient Mysteries: Esoteric traditions, Alchemy, Mysticism, Ancient Shamanism and the nature of human consciousness. He describes himself as an ‘initiate into the mysteries’ – his knowledge, theories and insights being the direct result of an extraordinary experience he had in 1993.

## Rosslyn and the Grail

Mark Oxbrow and Ian Robertson



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Another book about Rosslyn? It's amazing the amount of words that have been written about this small chapel, which lies in the countryside a surprisingly short distance away from the centre of Edinburgh. Not just words though, but memes. In our heads, it has become a Templar strong-hold, a bastion of treasures from the Holy Grail to the body of Jesus himself. However, this little book – rather than adding to the already confused situation – might just flush all those previous words and memes right down the drain.

Mark Oxbrow and Ian Robertson are dedicated Rosslyn researchers. They have spent more than ten years investigating the various histories and myths surrounding the enigmatic

chapel (and associated locales such as Rosslyn Castle). What they have discovered in this decade long journey is that there is truly a hidden dimension to Rosslyn Chapel. But it has nothing to do with everything you've heard. A quote from the pair in the introduction sums it all up: "Without careful research, it is easy to make serious mistakes."

This book is about undoing many of those 'serious mistakes'. Never mind the disclaimer that their aim "is not to debunk the myths or to explain away the magic and mystery of the chapel and castle," because that is exactly what the book does, and in a methodical way. Each chapter is devoted to one particular myth about Rosslyn, and within them Oxbrow and Robertson detail the actual history – derived from in-depth research – versus the claims made by alternative historians, or in some cases the local folklore.

Much of this will be tough going for romantically-minded readers. The authors might feel correct in saying "the odd thing is that the actual history of Rosslyn is far more incredible and spell-binding than any of the theories and fantasies," but I personally doubt that readers will agree. It's hard to top hidden treasure, the quest for the Holy Grail, and the burial place of Jesus for incredible! However, this book is a *necessary* read. The revelations are eye-opening, even if it is in a debunking vein. For instance, the sculpted "Masonic angels", often trumpeted as proof of a secret connection to early Freemasonry, are revealed to be 19th century additions carried

Amid the myths to be exploded is the identification of aloe and maize carvings within Rosslyn Chapel

about during controversial restoration work by architect – and Freemason – David Bryce.

The various myths and fantasies upon which the chapters are based include the murdered apprentice, the haunted castle, Robert the Bruce and the white deer, the secret crypt, the Knights Templar, the Holy Grail and *The Da Vinci Code*. The first chapter, “Amidst the Woods”, provides an historical introduction to the area while also making a claim for a connection to Arthurian myths (which the authors say was co-opted by English monks in Glastonbury during the 12th century). From there Rosslyn and the Grail alternates between sentimental expositions of local folklore, and attacks on alternative historians. Andrew Sinclair in particular comes in for some savage treatment, while others criticised include Tim Wallace-Murphy, Knight and Lomas, and Baigent and Leigh. Strangely enough, the only mention of Henry Lincoln is a short passage praising him for his courage in taking on new ideas and admitting to being wrong . . . some Rennes le Chateau critics might wonder at this treatment compared to the others.

Amid the myths to be exploded is the identification of aloe and maize carvings within Rosslyn Chapel (said to be strawberry leaves and wheat), that the crypt hides some great secret, that the chapel is based on the ground-plan of Solomon’s Temple, and that the Templars had a hand in its construction. The attribution of pagan worship via the Green Men within Rosslyn is also debunked, with Robertson and Oxbrow pointing out that the Green Men are a decorative feature first used by the Romans which flourished in medieval churches – although they later acknowledge a link to vegetative cycles, when they point out that the Green Men ‘age’ as you walk around the chapel clockwise...yet another fascinating revelation amongst many to be found in *Rosslyn and the Grail*.

The sheer amount of facts and historical references which the authors have turned up sometimes actually detracts from the book a little. Reader interaction often takes a backseat to the listing of facts, and some may feel they are being preached to, more than taught (always a bad thing in a debunking book). This problem extends to a number of clumsy segues between topics; at

It's hard to top hidden treasure, the quest for the Holy Grail, and the burial place of Jesus for incredible!

times it took me more than four paragraphs to realise I was reading about a different topic.

The authors’ warning of serious mistakes arising from lack of careful research is not something which readers should forget about when reading this book either. A number of times the reference is made to the official ‘start date’ of Freemasonry (when addressing alternative historians’ claim for Masonic influences at Rosslyn), when there are obvious historical footnotes which suggest speculative Freemasonry arose – in some form – well before this date. Small items such as this detract from the presentation in *Rosslyn and the Grail*, as it sounds like the authors are all too keen to support their own beliefs uncritically.

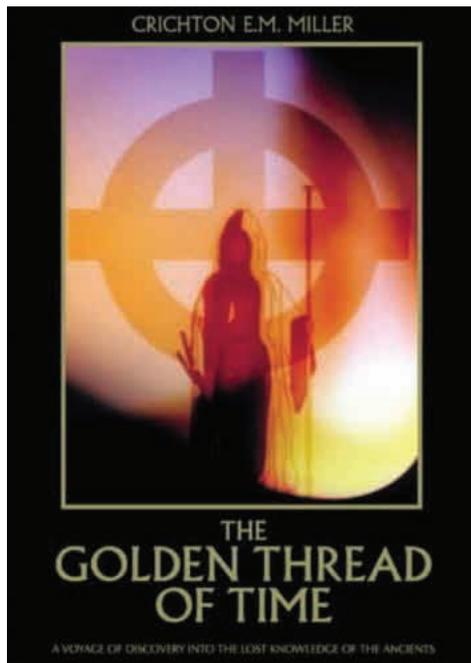
Overall though, that simply can’t be said of the book as a whole. The research is first rate, the revelations often startling. Readers will also be fascinated by much of the local lore which hasn’t turned up in the ‘popular’ literature on Rosslyn, such as the tales of the ghostly White Lady, and the treasure in Rosslyn Castle. The fourteen chapters are supplemented by six appendices (almost half as many pages in the appendices as in the rest of the book) which provide a timeline, historical writings supporting their research and associated myths.

Curiously enough, the authors seem to continually hint at a real connection between Rosslyn and the Arthurian myths and legends of the Holy Grail (and also seen in the title of the book). However, they never really develop this idea as they promise – perhaps the scene is being set for a sequel which moves from debunking mode to providing fresh insights. Whatever the case, this is simply a must-have book for Rosslyn enthusiasts.

## *The Golden Thread of Time*

Crichton Miller

The following review is by Philip Gardiner, author of *The Shining Ones*, *The Serpent Grail* and *Gnosis*. An essay by Philip can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Sub Rosa*.



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Crichton Miller is a man on a mission. His mission is, in my humble opinion, far more important than the Victorian search for the source of the Nile or the 60's race for space. It is more extravagant than the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and in my mind of more archaeological, scientific and historical importance than just about anything else you care to mention.

To comprehend why I say this we need to just consider a few points. Firstly, how many of us agree that our Mother Earth is warming? How many of us are aware over the short lifetimes that we have had so far that the climate has been altering year after year? I know for myself, living in middle England that we no longer have the snowstorms I knew as a child;

that Autumn is moving into Winter; Spring is coming sooner and Summer is stretching itself out like a lazy lion in the Sahara. In other parts of the globe huge waves crash onto idyllic shores and destroy the lives of thousands of humans; whirling tornadoes break and batter whole States in America and ice mountains the size of Ben Nevis collapse and crumble into the warming waters. There is one thing that is sure – the world is changing around us as we live and breath. Whether you believe this change is man-made or by the power of the solar Father in the sky; whether you think the leaders of political parties and corporate empires are making the destruction of the world a reality or it is simply a cycle of nature – one thing overrides the argument – we cannot escape it now.

And so, what to do, where to go, to whom do we turn? What will you hide away in your secure dug-out? Will you hoard tinned food and a tin opener? Or bottled water? And when they run out, what then? How will you hunt for food then? Should you carry a gun? And where will you get the bullets when all the shops have been removed by that passing ice-flow?

You will need to travel. You will need to move fast and over long distances. You will need to know the weather cycles and the times of year and you will need to know your way around. How are you going to do this?

You see what Crichton has stumbled upon may seem on first viewing to be fairly mundane. But, the closer you look and the more you find out, the more you become consumed

...you become consumed in the intricacies, both exoteric and esoteric, of the workings of the artefact

in the intricacies, both exoteric and esoteric, of the workings of the artefact and the universe in general. This incredible discovery will one day change the world and help mankind to grow strong again. When we find ourselves in the stark reality of a nuclear winter; a solar consumed desert; a frozen wasteland – then and probably only then, will mankind remember this fight of Crichton Miller’s to make known the secret tool of the ancients. The reason is quite simple. Only by using this device, which requires no electricity, gas, petrol or any power at all will we then, be able to discover where and when we are. This may seem incredibly trivial to us now, but imagine standing in the middle of a barren landscape of brilliant snow or sand and needing to find your way home. How will you do this without your GPS? A compass only points north and there are two issues with this. Firstly north may move magnetically, and this will cause chaos as we are already discovering with our modern electromagnetic systems. And sec-

only the compass cannot tell you the time of day, month or year. The wonderful Celtic Cross that Crichton re-discovered is all any future survivor will need.

Read this book, keep it close to your heart; understand the workings of this cross, because one day, it may save your life. If you value your children’s or grandchildren’s lives then pass on the information and knowledge of the stars, let it be locked in their young minds and hearts. The future of humanity may again depend upon the wisdom of the ancients, who kept this knowledge for us locked subtly away. Crichton has re-discovered the incredible science and simplicity of our ancestors who too needed to escape the oncoming deluge over 12,000 years ago. Did mankind recover again because he had the cross?

I thought I would never hear myself say this to anybody - but take up the cross, it may very well be your saviour.

**Review by Philip Gardiner**

*“A ‘Zothyrian’ kaleidoscope of mystical verses...”*



## I J Y N X



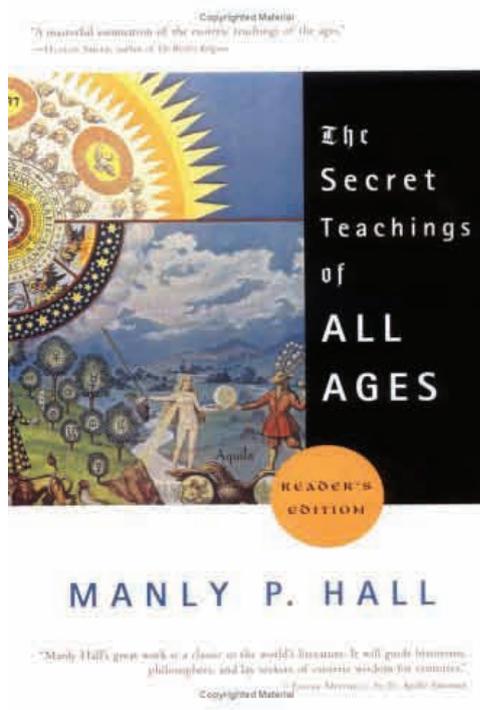
*“Flaxen-robed priests enter the shadow swallowed tomb,  
Pungent with the scent of sepulchral perfume,  
To murmur spells from the Book of the Dead  
In the lamp-flickered chamber where litanies are read,  
Its cold walls ornamented with palette and reed  
In jeweled scenes of the soul’s passage through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

**A collection of occult-influenced prose by Blair Mackenzie Blake**

[www.toolband.com](http://www.toolband.com)

## *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*

Manly P. Hall



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There aren't too many books which you can describe as life-changing. Manly P. Hall's *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* was one of those books for me. When I first encountered an earlier edition of this old tome at age twelve, I had to deal with a huge book filled with occult imagery and complemented by a suitably thick layer of dust, unearthed in a dim recess of the local library. While a nice prop in the movies, it certainly was an awkward thing to read at a small study desk.

For those wishing to add a copy of this influential book to their collection, the good folks over at Tarcher-Penguin have done us all a massive favour in releasing a "Reader's Edition" of Hall's masterwork – somehow squeezing the text (and a fair number of the images) into a very portable 672-page paperback of less-than 6 by 10 inch dimensions. Not to mention you can pick it up for well under \$US20 at Amazon. But enough of the superficial details – what is it

about this book that has inspired so many?

For me personally – looking in retrospect – I think I found in Hall a kindred spirit, and in his book an encyclopedic survey of all those teachings "wholly beyond the pale of materialistic theology". I'm sure, as an impressionable twelve-year-old, the majestic esoteric look of the book helped plenty as well. But Hall's attitude to our modern dogma of materialism, and the urgent need to reclaim the sacred, was eerie in its prescience. In the preface to the Diamond Jubilee edition of *The Secret Teachings*, he reflected on the circumstances which led him to write the book:

*The original edition was planned and issued in the interval between the termination of World War I and the Great Depression of 1929. During this time I had a brief career on Wall Street, the outstanding event of which was witnessing a man depressed over investment losses take his life*

*My fleeting contact with high finance resulted in serious doubts concerning business as it was being conducted. It was apparent that materialism was in complete control of the economic structure, the final objective of which was for the individual to become part of a system providing an economic security at the expense of the human soul, mind, and body.*

In the eight decades since the book was first published it would seem that Hall's concern was well justified, and the urgency for a solution to rampant materialism has grown exponentially.

Manly P. Hall had not even turned 28 when *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* was first published.

That is not to say that Hall failed in his goal, for *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* has become one of the classics of esoteric literature, and influenced many in varied ways. Are we to expect the masses of our reality TV generation to pick up this work and read with interest about the Cabiric Mysteries of Samothrace? Not likely. But perhaps it has and will continue to influence enough of the right people, that some of the sacred will be reclaimed through their own contributions.

To provide a suitable summary of the content of this book would take a book itself. All that can be offered in this space is that *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* will tutor you on the ancient mysteries, secret societies, philosophy, myth and religion. Chapters on Pythagoras, the Rosicrucians, Alchemy, Qabbalism, mystic Christianity, the Tarot and Zodiac (almost 50 chapters all up) will leave the reader not just enlightened, but perhaps even initiated. However, while it may bear all the hallmarks of a Bible of the mystical, this is not God's infallible word. It is the awe-inspiring writings of a disaffected twenty-something, who is wise enough to preface his work by saying:

*I make no claim for either the infallibility or the originality of any statement herein contained. I have studied the fragmentary writings of the ancients sufficiently to realize that dogmatic utterances concerning their tenets are worse than foolhardy. Traditionalism is the curse of modern philosophy, particularly that of the European schools.*

Did I say twenty-something? Certainly - Manly P. Hall had not even turned 28 when *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* was first published. To many, such a fact would perhaps turn them off the book, fearing a superficial and immature survey of the world's most spiritual ideas and traditions. However, this is not the case. Somehow – whether you label it channeling, past-life knowledge, or just plain precocious talent – Hall was able to assemble a masterwork worthy of a 70-year-old professor of religion and philosophy.

The other refreshing aspect of *The Secret Teachings* is its objective presentation. While most modern authors use the ancient traditions

## *The Secret Teachings of All Ages was meant as a codex of mystical philosophies*

to justify their own personal theory (or best-selling self-help CD range), Hall worked from a different angle. *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* was meant as a codex of mystical philosophies – a comprehensive guide for the neophyte to the often fragmentary writings of the ancient sages and mystery schools. Hall again explains:

*Having no particular 'ism' of my own to promulgate, I have not attempted to twist the original writings to substantiate preconceived notions, nor have I distorted doctrines in any effort to reconcile the irreconcilable differences present in the various systems of religio-philosophic thought.*

*The entire theory of the book is diametrically opposed to the modern method of thinking, for it is concerned with subjects openly ridiculed by the sophists of the twentieth century. Its true purpose is to introduce the mind of the reader to a hypothesis of living wholly beyond the pale of materialistic theology, philosophy or science.*

This is a work to be treasured, and for anyone interested in esoteric philosophy I sincerely recommend this new readers edition of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*. If you have the money, then the hardcover edition would certainly be a worthwhile acquisition. But for the rest of us, Tarcher-Penguin have offered the next best thing. Boasting the full text of the original, plus 100 line drawings and 14 of the original colour plates by artist J. Augustus Knapp, the new reader's edition of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* takes pride of place on my reading table – and will be a work that I pass on to my own children.

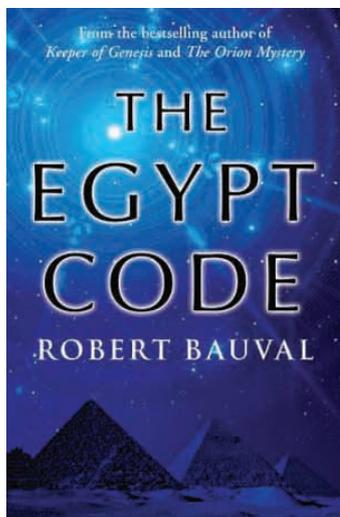


Book: *The Egypt Code*  
Author: Robert Bauval  
Release: March 2, 2006

Best-selling author Robert Bauval makes a long-awaited return next year with his next book *The Egypt Code*, a book which he says will answer the nagging question of ‘WHY?’

“Why go to all this trouble and effort to raise giant pyramids and temples in ‘the image of the heaven?’” says Bauval. “Why the desire to have an Egypt that is ‘As above, so Below’? The answer is as intriguing as it is simple . . . if you know were to look, that is . . .”

*The Egypt Code* is said to demonstrate that the changes that took place in the sky over the 3000 years of ancient Egyptian civilisation, from roughly 3000 BC to the Christian era, are ‘reflected’, so to speak, on the land with the positioning and orientation of pyramids, temples and religious centres.



Book: *I Have America Surrounded*  
Author: John Higgs  
Release: 2006

A new book is scheduled to come out in 2006 taking a look at the life of counter-culture hero (and villain to some), Timothy Leary. *I Have America Surrounded: The Life of Timothy Leary* has been written with access to all Leary’s papers and letters and the full co-operation of his estate and archivist. It’s a mix of both the adventure of his life and the ideas that drove him. There is also a strong focus on his fugitive life after his prison break and his collaboration with the FBI – stories that have never been told properly before. More information about the book, and a mailing list for news, can be found at the official website for Higg’s book ([www.ihaveamericasurrounded.com](http://www.ihaveamericasurrounded.com)).

Book: *What Happens When We Die?*  
Author: Sam Parnia  
Release: January 15, 2006

Dr Sam Parnia is one of the leading modern researchers into Near Death Experiences (NDEs). His work as an emergency doctor led him to contemplate the mysteries surrounding death, and eventually on a quest to discover what happens when we die. This book will explain how he has investigated the possibility the survival of consciousness, and his conclusions.



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