

ISSUE 1 • APRIL 16, 2020

► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

The Newsletter of the Scientific and Medical Network

► EDITORIAL

Sense-making in a time of crisis

BY DAVID LORIMER



A warm welcome to the first edition of *Towards a New Renaissance*! Ten years ago Oliver Robinson and I edited a volume called *A New Renaissance* and we have also held conferences around this theme, including one in Pari, Italy.

So it seemed an appropriate title at a time when our old structures are crumbling and we need a cultural rebirth based on perennial principles and real human values. This is the task to which the Network and its members have been dedicated for nearly 50 years.

Each edition will contain featured blogs, articles and videos, a link to a previous SMN conference video, a 'bookcast' (in which I read a review previously published in *Paradigm Explorer*), a recommended podcast as well as details of upcoming events and webinars. Like many organisations, we are moving some events and content online, including the London group.

No doubt, like me, you have been inundated with information about – and differing views on – the coronavirus and its significance. Each of us has to try to make their own sense of this input, and we will do so according to our existing concepts and frameworks – as also applies to consciousness with respect to our work with the Galileo Commission. We also have individual 'boggle thresholds' (a term invented by Renee Haynes) set at different levels of scepticism.

So in this case, how much significance do we attribute to our overall systemic environmental impact and associated zoonotic diseases from traded animals (see the article by

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► FEATURED BLOG



Chris Johnson: [A Metaphysical Meta-Analysis of Covid-19](#)

"In the grander scheme of things, covid-19, like any seemingly negative experience that appears to simply 'happen to us' through chance, is in actuality an event of great benefit to us all. I'm aware that this statement is difficult, if not impossible to accept if a loved one has recently succumbed to the virus and returned their personality's attention to the nonphysical plains.

However, my promise is that by the end of this somewhat lengthy two-part post, whether directly affected or not, you will come away with a keener understanding of this co-created mass event, a deeper appreciation of those that have left us during such mass events, and perhaps even transmuted any fearfulness into a feeling of excitement for our immediate future."

Read the full blog [here](#).

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Ronnie Cummins on page 4)? What do we make of emerging peer-reviewed reports on the efficacy of Vitamin C in treating coronavirus (see www.orthomolecular.org)?

Although a link is considered genetically improbable in the case of COVID-19, the presence in Wuhan of a biological weapons research facility highlights potential dangers of this kind of research.

In 2015 Italian State TV showed how Chinese scientists were doing biological experiments on a SARS connected virus derived from bats and mice and believed to be coronavirus,

"Those of us who would like to see and be part of a New Renaissance will need to stand up and be counted"

and asked whether it was worth the risk in order to be able to modify the virus for compatibility with human organisms.

And how do we interpret Event 201, a high-level pandemic simulation exercise that was held on October 18 last year in New York and hosted by the World Economic Forum and the Gates Foundation?

Whatever your view on these matters, this global event represents a potential reset of our culture and values. And these will need to be clearly articulated, as the political and economic power still lies very much with those who would like to continue business as usual (see Naomi Klein on page 3 and my review of her book in *Paradigm Explorer*, issue 131).

Those of us who would like to see and be part of a New Renaissance will need to stand up and be counted if this crisis is not to go to waste.

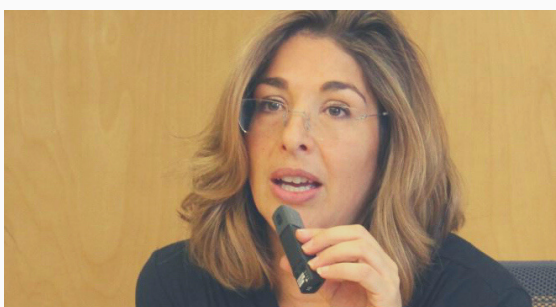
In a moving clip on YouTube former Democratic presidential nominee Marianne Williamson quotes Rilke as saying: "let me not squander the hour of my pain." She is the President that America needed but was not mature enough to choose. This crisis can be an opportunity, but we will need to seize it. 🌐

► VIDEOS OF NOTE

Naomi Klein: **Coronavirus Capitalism**

Author and activist Naomi Klein spoke about the current situation in a clip on www.democracynow.org. She says that this crisis, like earlier ones, could be “a catalyst to shower aid on the wealthiest interests in society, including those most responsible for our current vulnerabilities, while offering next to nothing to most workers and small businesses.”

In 2007, Klein wrote *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Now she argues President Trump’s plan is a “pandemic shock doctrine” and says



that its “vital for people to fight for the kind of transformative change that can not only curb the worst effects of the current crisis but also set society on a more just path.” See the clip on the ‘Democracy Now!’ site [here](#).

Gregg Braden on COVID-19 and more....

Gregg Braden:

COVID-19: Truth and Fiction

Covers scientific and medical aspects of the pandemic in a balanced fashion. A highly informative presentation.

Honorary Member, Prof Ravi Ravindra:

Reflections on the spiritual context of the pandemic.

Professor Ravindra brings his deep wisdom to this crisis.

Lama Alan Wallace, Eva Natanya and Fr Laurence Freeman:

A Contemplative Path through the Crisis

Part of The Bonnevaux Dialogues, held on 21-28 March 2020. Some meditative nourishment during this time of turning inwards.

Dr Iain McGilchrist:

Technology, Spirituality and Wellbeing.

A live lecture and discussion from his home in Skye. From our Mystics and Scientists 2019 conference.

► FEATURED BLOG



Giles Hutchins: **Can the Darkness of Crisis Reveal a New Dawn?**

“We live amid great upheaval. The Pandemic of Covid-19 is creating upset worldwide and this will be felt for many months to come.

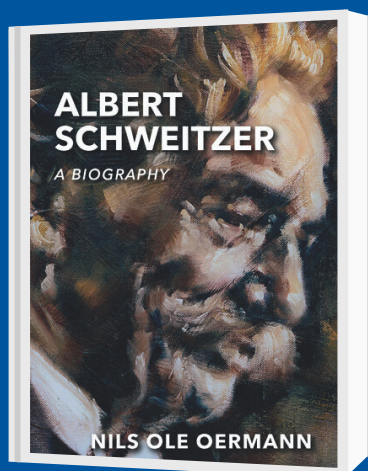
Often it is the most vulnerable who are most greatly affected. Yet a global crisis at every level and across all levels can be leveling.

We are all in this together. We are all experiencing a tremendous change to daily routine. We are all connected in this crisis, paradoxically, while keeping our distance from each other.”

Read the full blog [here](#).

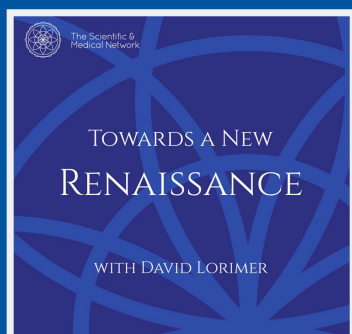


► THE BOOKCAST



Every edition of *Towards a New Renaissance* will feature a 'bookcast' - a podcast recording of David Lorimer reading one or two of the many book reviews he has published in *Paradigm Explorer*.

This week's review is of **Albert Schweitzer: A Biography** by Nils Ole Oermann. David says: "My interest in Schweitzer goes back to the 1960s when I first heard his Bach organ recordings then became interested in his ethic of 'Reverence for Life'."



Find the full bookcast on [RedCircle](#), [Apple podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [Stitcher](#).

► ARTICLES OF NOTE

Patrick Holden, CBE, of the Sustainable Food Trust: **Sustainable Food Systems**

Holden says: "The key difference between then and now is that during the 1940s there was still a comprehensive latticework of local food supply infrastructure which included production on Britain's diverse mixed family farms, small dairies, packhouses, processing units, abattoirs, butchers and retail outlets.

All this infrastructure provided a means of getting the raw materials to local populations in a secure and sustainable manner. This is more or less a perfect description of a resilient food system, but during the last five decades nearly all of this has disappeared." Full article [here](#).

Alliance for Natural Health: **COVID-19 update**

The Alliance brings you the latest information on the pandemic as much of the world goes into lockdown. A thorough briefing with links. Full article [here](#).

Ronnie Cummins: **Coronavirus - Survival, Resistance and Regeneration**

A radical article by the Founder of Organic Consumers, with systemic links: "The coronavirus pandemic, like the climate crisis, is not an accident, not an act of God. Both of these threats have arisen out of a US and global food, farming, energy, resource extraction, economic, militaristic "national security" and trading system that is degenerative, unethical, inequitable and as we see now, self-destructive."

Full article [here](#).

Quote

"A pessimist sees the difficulty
in every opportunity;
an optimist sees the opportunity
in every difficulty."

— Sir Winston Churchill



► UPCOMING EVENTS

Mystics and Scientists online

Many inspiring and creative responses are emerging in response to the current pandemic panic that may open up the possibility for the kind of defining breakthrough and cultural renaissance that the Network has been working towards over many decades.

Following the postponement of our scheduled **Mystics and Scientists - Re-Enchanting the World** conference (to April 2021) we are delighted to offer a weekend of live webinars. The new event is called **Mystics and Scientists Extra: One Mind, One Planet, One Health** and will feature well-known international speakers, each of whom will share their own personal and professional take within the context of our overall theme.

Do join our like-minded community for what promises to be an insightful and nourishing weekend. For more information and tickets go to mysticsandscientists.org.

Other events to look out for....

- **12 May** — Barbie Dossey and Deva-Marie Beck: **webinar**
- **9 June** — Jules Evans: **live webinar**

Find more details on our [‘Future Events’](#) page.

► FEATURED PODCAST

Brené Brown: [Unlocking Us](#)

BY CHARLOTTE LORIMER

Brené Brown launched her podcast ‘Unlocking Us’ in March, and she couldn’t have done so at a better time. “I want this to be a podcast that’s real, unpolished, honest, and reflects both the magic and the messiness of what it means to be human,” she writes. In [her third episode](#) she spoke to her friend and fellow leader **Glennon Doyle**. Glennon is the author of *Untamed* and founder of Together Rising, an all-women nonprofit organisation that is revolutionising grassroots philanthropy. Glennon says: “There’s one thing that would be worse than feeling it all. And that is missing it all. Feeling it all is how we don’t miss this ‘being human’ thing, this becoming thing, that we’re doing here. And it starts with being still.” Listen [here](#).



► NETWORK ADDRESS



Peter Fenwick,
President of the SMN:
[Material Crisis as a](#)
[Spiritual Opportunity](#)

Speaking from his home in Scotland, Peter Fenwick offers his thoughts and wisdom at this difficult time in a special message to the SMN and its supporters.

Watch the full address [here](#).

► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

Editor: David Lorimer
Layout: Andrew Polson

Disclaimer: The selections in this newsletter are personal – the Network has no consensus view on the material covered. Readers need to draw their own conclusions on the basis of evidence and reason.

For all enquiries click [here](#).
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