

# ► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

The Newsletter of the Scientific and Medical Network

## ► EDITORIAL

### Polarity and Polarisation

BY DAVID LORIMER



I spent the summer of 1973 at the University of Grenoble, a delightful city that was also the home of Hector Berlioz. One of the books I read there was *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill where the following sentence etched itself on my mind: 'He who knows only his own side of the argument knows little of that.' For me, the fundamental components bearing on the views we take are presuppositions and evidence, while reason and logic are neutral and universally applicable.

In the last few months, we have all experienced conflicting claims and narratives and are likely to have taken a view one way or the other in what amounts to an information war. For me, this is part of a larger philosophical tension between pharmaceutical and natural approaches to health that has a long history.

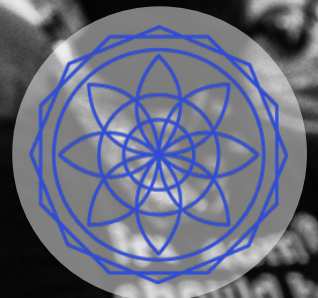
Communication power, as I suggested in a previous editorial, is the capacity to impose a narrative and remove competition through censorship. This process has exacerbated existing

polarisations while it is important to respect other informed viewpoints and to try to understand where they are coming from. This may involve deep listening and also the suspending of one's own assumptions, as David Bohm has

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David Bohm



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## ► FEATURED BLOG



### **Michael Jawer:** **Sentience, not** **Consciousness, is** **Key to the Cosmos**

Drawing on the thesis of his recent book *Sensitive Soul* (reviewed in *Paradigm Explorer* 134), Michael suggests that questions such as 'Is the universe conscious?' and 'Does consciousness pervade the universe?' are in fact the wrong ones. Rather, he argues that sentience – the ability to feel – actually underlies consciousness.

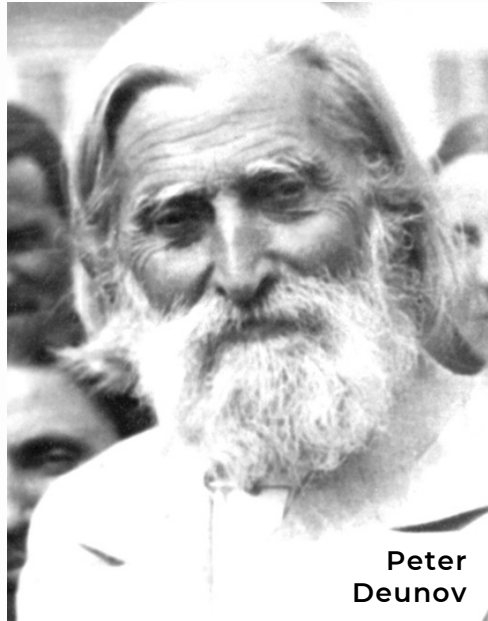
*'It's entirely possible, furthermore, that one can feel something and not quite grasp it. We can be bothered by something precisely because we "can't put our finger on it"; we can also derive insights from dreams that were evidently in our unconscious but not our conscious mind. So, the possibility that the universe is conducive to sentience or to feelings and images beneath the threshold of consciousness becomes a more elementary prospect to tackle.'* Read it [here](#).

*Continued from page 1*

suggested. In nature, all life is polarised between masculine and feminine, shoot and root, positive and negative, light and dark, yang and yin. However, these polarities exist within larger wholes and cycles, as Anne Baring and Jules Cashford noted in *The Myth of the Goddess* – for instance, in the phases of the lunar cycle. These are dualities rather than dualism, which hardens the polarity into seemingly irreconcilable opposites and warring



factions – good and evil, right and wrong.




**Peter  
Deunov**

I was recently reading a lecture given in 1943 – the last year of his life – by Peter Deunov. In it he analyses the deep symbolism embedded in major and minor keys, suggesting that major is related to the central nervous system and minor to the sympathetic nervous system, major to health, joy and life,

minor to illness, sorrow and death, major to the brain, minor to the heart – overall, the organism functions in a musical or rhythmical fashion, while birth and death represent

*“These are dualities rather than dualism, which hardens the polarity into seemingly irreconcilable opposites and warring factions”*

an eternal process of renewal. The depth of renewal we now need implies a process of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing in relation to historic and structural injustices that has to move beyond existing polarisations to find a new common ground rooted in integrity, transparency and truth if trust is ultimately to be re-established. 



## ► VIDEOS OF NOTE

### Dean Radin and Deepak Chopra in dialogue

Dr. Dean Radin, the chief Scientist for the Institute of Noetic Sciences, was recently featured on Deepak Chopra's YouTube channel The Chopra Well as part of his ongoing series of talks *Conversations at the Intersection of Cutting Edge Science and Spirituality*. In this dialogue, they discuss Dean's work in paranormal research and also his writing, including his books *Real Magic*, *Entangled Minds*, and *Supernormal*. They also take a close look at magic: examining definitions, what it means to say it is 'real' and how science may try to prove it. Watch the discussion [here](#).

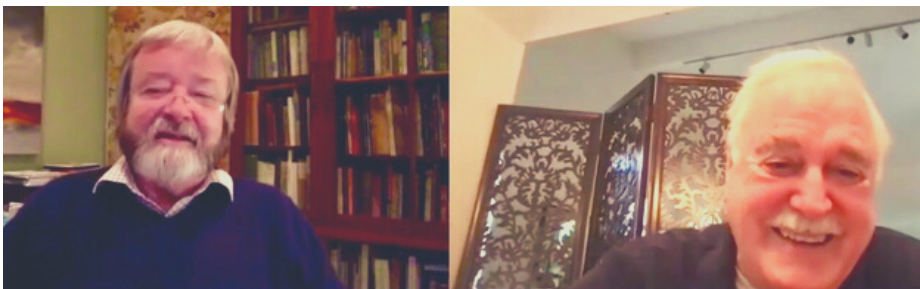


Dean Radin



Deepak Chopra

### Iain McGilchrist and John Cleese on creativity and humour



Dr Iain McGilchrist chats to John Cleese about the creative process, playfulness and the meaning of life on Iain's YouTube channel, focusing around John's recent book, *Creativity: A Short and Cheerful Guide*. Iain makes the important point that our education system drives the development of convergent left hemisphere thinking while divergent thinking is vital for creativity. We need to open up to other ways of thinking and not assume a stance of critical superiority. Find all three parts of the talk here: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#).

## ► FEATURED BLOG



**Peter Schulte: [How polarity management can help us balance seemingly conflicting goals and values](#)**

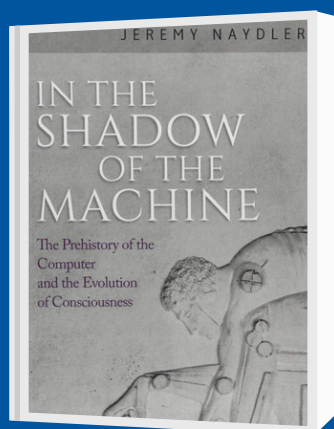
Peter Schulte is the founder of Kindling, a non-profit org that reports on markers of positive social change. In this post on Kindling's site he presents a model for reconciling differences based on Barry Johnson's book *Polarity Management*.

*'In many, if not most, cases, if you believe something, the opposite is equally true. You may see extremely clearly how desperately your organization must embrace change and adaptability. But your colleague may see the need for stability just as vividly and be just as 'right'. The deepest wisdom – and your potentially greatest contribution to your organisation – is in embracing both those truths at the same time. Together, these seemingly conflicting truths are polarities.'*

Read the full post [here](#).

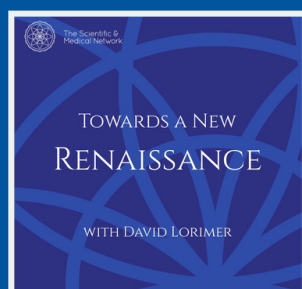


## ► THE BOOKCAST



### Technology and the Future

This episode reviews two significant books that give the wider historical and philosophical context for technology and its patterns of thinking. The first is *The Metaphysics of Technology* by David Skrbina and the second is *In the Shadow of the Machine* by Jeremy Naydler, who has recently published a sequel entitled *The Struggle for a Human Future*. The key question these books present is: what does it mean to be human, particularly in terms of the validity of spiritual experience? Listen to the episode [here](#).



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

## ► ARTICLES OF NOTE

### Dr Steve Taylor: *An Introduction to Panspiritism – An Alternative to Materialism and Panpsychism*



Featured in the Zygon Journal of Religion and Science this article introduces Steve's philosophical approach, termed 'panspiritism', as elaborated in his recent book *Spiritual Science*. He puts this in relation to panpsychism and its relationship to idealism and theism and to mystical experiences, and suggests that his approach can help to elucidate a wide range of phenomena that appear anomalous or problematic from a materialist point of view. He writes: *'Although fundamental consciousness pervades everything, all things are not conscious. Only structures that have the necessary complexity and organizational form to receive and canalize fundamental consciousness into themselves have consciousness as their intrinsic nature.'* Read the article [here](#).

### Dr Oliver Robinson: *Lockdown Policies – An Interdisciplinary Review*

This journal article, currently under peer review, was the basis for Olly's very well-received recent SMN webinar on this topic. As he says in the intro to that talk, any discussion of lockdowns requires an open-ended and very nuanced approach in order to avoid reductionism, and here he lays out the extensive research behind his findings. The article is linked to from Olly's website [here](#). And the talk itself is [here](#).

### Quote

**"No passion so effectually robs the mind of its powers of acting and reasoning as fear."  
- Edmund Burke (Irish Statesman, 1729-1797)**



### The lightened view

**"I'm reading a great book on anti-gravity... I can't put it down!"**





## ► UPCOMING EVENTS ONLINE

### Love, Light and Consciousness, and more...

• Wednesday, 3 March, 7.30-9.30pm.

Mark Gober: *An End to Upside Down Thinking and Living*

• Wednesday, 10 March, 7.30-9.30pm.

Dr Siegmur Gerken: *Love, Light and Consciousness - and its Integration into the Body-Mind Field*

• Saturday, 13 March, 6.00-8.00pm.

Jade Shaw panel discussion: *Indigenous Views on Out of Body Experiences*

Find more details at [www.mysticsandscientists.org](http://www.mysticsandscientists.org).

### Recent webinars - recordings now available!

These are all now available to view for Network members, or purchase individually at [www.mysticsandscientists.org](http://www.mysticsandscientists.org).

- Lord Richard Layard FBA: *Can we be Happier?*
- Dr Suzanne Zeedyk: *The Science of Connection*
- Prof Oliver Robinson: *Lockdown Policies: Doing more harm than good?*
- Prof Paul Gilbert: *Creating a Compassionate World through Caring and Sharing*

Also: our recordings of *Beyond the Brain Online 2020* are available at [www.beyondthebrain.org](http://www.beyondthebrain.org).

## ► FEATURED PODCAST

### Katie Piper's Extraordinary People

BY CHARLOTTE LORIMER

In her podcast *Extraordinary People*, activist and burn survivor Katie Piper talks to her guests about overcoming adversity. She asks compelling questions based on thorough research and often weaves in elements of her own story, such as in her interview with fellow podcaster and writer Elizabeth Day. As part of their conversation, they discuss the 'seven principles of failure,' something Elizabeth explores in her latest book, *Failosophy*. Listen to the episode [here](#).



## ► SMN VIDEO CLIPS



**Kevin Ashbridge**

### Imaginal Inspirations

Kevin has made a number of short clips as part of the *Imaginal Inspirations* series of podcasts, available on [Redcircle](#) and the Galileo Commission [website](#). At present these clips can be found on the [SMN YouTube channel](#). Watch two now: for Anne Baring click [here](#) and for Larry Dossey go [here](#).

## ► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

**Editor: David Lorimer**

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**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](#).  
Site: [explore.scimednet.org](http://explore.scimednet.org)

## ► HELP US NURTURE AND GROW TANR!



We are excited to bring you *Towards a New Renaissance* on a regular basis and the responses we have received have been brilliant.

If you have been enjoying this monthly digest of David Lorimer's editorials, featured blogs, suggested videos and articles – and of course, David's ongoing 'bookcast' of spoken reviews, then would you consider making a supportive donation?

Any amount would be a great help toward our costs of time and labour. And a regular donation – even as little as £2–£5 a month – can allow us to plan ahead with new ways to bring you great content.

Click here to choose a donation level via PayPal - and thank you!

**Donate**

## ► JOIN THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK...

### ...AND ENJOY ACCESS TO THE RECORDINGS OF ALL OUR RECENT ONLINE EVENTS

The last twelve months of restricted movement has produced a sharp increase in high-quality online presentations and events and the Scientific and Medical Network has been fully participating in this wave of activity. As a result we are delighted to be able to offer our members a growing number of excellent webinar recordings as a part of their full membership package. A few of our recent ones are below:

**MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2020**  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS  
AN EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY INTO  
FUNGAL INTELLIGENCE

**ENTANGLED LIVES**  
FUNGAL NETWORKS, ECOLOGY, AND US  
• Dr Merlin Sheldrake •

How do fungi - and our relationships with them - change our understanding of life on Earth?

THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2020 • 7:30-9:30 PM (BST)  
WWW.MYSTICSANDSCIENTISTS.ORG

**MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2020**  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

**LSD  
AND THE MIND  
OF THE UNIVERSE**

**DR CHRIS BACHE**

A mind and heart-expanding insight into the extraordinary spiritual odyssey that brought him revelatory understandings of the Universal Cosmic Mind as our common Ground of Being

Can we all access the Cosmic Mind?

THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2020 • 7:30-9:30 PM (BST)  
WWW.MYSTICSANDSCIENTISTS.ORG

**MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2021**  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

**LIVING LIKE CRAZY:  
THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING A  
COMPASSIONATE WORLD**

HOW DO WE ADDRESS THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN SHARING  
AND CARING VERSUS CONTROLLING AND HOLDING  
BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGIES?

• Prof Paul Gilbert •

WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY • 7:30-9:30 PM (GMT)  
WWW.MYSTICSANDSCIENTISTS.ORG

**MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2021**  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

**THE SCIENCE OF CONNECTION:  
WHY WE HUMANS ARE WIRED  
FOR MEANING-MAKING**

HOW AND WHY ARE WE ALL INNATELY INTERCONNECTED?

• Dr Suzanne Zeedyk •

WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY • 7:30-9:30 PM (GMT)  
WWW.MYSTICSANDSCIENTISTS.ORG

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