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**B.H. JONES  
LONDON, ONTARIO  
2019**

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# **UFOS - OURS TO DISCOVER**

978-1-55253-110-5

Distributed By:

**HMS**  
**PRESS**

- PREFACE -

I wasn't interested in UFOs until I heard a popular scientist say we shouldn't be interested in them at all.

This was back in 1975 and the popular scientist was Carl Sagan. He was the host of a television show full of enthusiasm for the wonders of nature and the discoveries of science. His favorite phrase was "billions and billions" which he often applied to celestial objects since he was an astrophysicist. I was watching television one afternoon and Carl was a guest on a talk show. In the course of the interview the host asked him his opinion of UFOs. Carl wasn't enthusiastic. When a newspaper reporter asked him the same question a week later he put it this way -

"As for UFOs, lost continents and the like, the world can ill afford such pseudoscientific twaddle."

I didn't expect Carl to take to UFOs. There was a lack of physical evidence science relies on and the popular extra-terrestrial theory wouldn't sit well with an astrophysicist who'd been watching the skies for decades without seeing a flying saucer coming or going. Yet the comparison of UFOs and lost continents is misleading. Believers in Atlantis and other lost continents have to be believers since there's not a witness among them; it's an enthusiasm and a cult and to the plain person a curiosity. The story of UFOs on the other hand is based on the eyewitness accounts of plain people. It's a story that attracts enthusiasts and cults but isn't based on them. I don't think Plato, who gave us the story of Atlantis, provided the names of witnesses to Atlantis going under but the names of neighbors who have seen UFOs coming down are in the files of every local newspaper.

Sagan, convinced UFOs were mistakes that gave rise to fantasies or fantasies that gave rise to mistakes, returned to his telescope and ivory tower, a place where funny lights never shone, fantastic machines never hovered and unknown creatures feared to tread. London, Ontario where I was born and still live was rather different. Although I didn't know it at the time, there was a history of sightings going back to the early fifties. In a book published in 1975 the well-known writer on unusual events John A. Keel tells us "London, Ontario has been the site of many interesting UFO events in the last twenty years."

Even if I hadn't seen a UFO I could find out more about them. I was starting from scratch and it turned out London was the place to be. One reason was our local paper The London Free Press. From time to time a reporter and photographer would go out to investi-

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gate sightings. The other reason was a new bookstore, Marc Emery's bookshop City Lights, and it provided all the old UFO books and magazines I'd ever need. For the most part it was the easy reading of short and dramatic stories. As time went by and I read more and more of them it slowly dawned on me I was reading versions of three local encounters I'd found in the Free Press in '75 and filed away.

# 1

- UFOS OVER ONTARIO -

- ON BUSH ROAD -

The Saturday feature in The Free Press, January 25 was "UFOS – they thought someone was looking at them" by George Hutchison. A photograph shows one of the witnesses, Mrs. Kay Demcie, standing in a field of stubble and small drifts of snow. She's pointing behind her at the tops of a few bare winter trees lining Bush Road, lost behind bushes but indicated by a few white posts. A couple weeks earlier, late in the evening, the branches were not black lines on a grey sky but were lit from within by a strange glow which was moving "through and among" them as it followed the car.

Three people were in the car. teenagers Brad Jones, and Brenda Symms and grey-haired Mrs. Demcie. Bush Road, a country road full of twists and turns and overhung with branches, was their way to St. Thomas from the hamlet of Fingal. As they drove along Kay noticed a "fluorescent glow surrounded by a blue haze" in the treetops following the car turn for turn. "That's a funny light, isn't it?" she finally asked. "Yes, I've been watching it," Brenda said. Brad heard their exchange, let up on the gas, and that's when the engine died-

"I've never heard a car stop like that before," Kay said, "it didn't cough. It just stopped. And this car wasn't in the habit of doing that. The radio had been blasting. You know how young people have it. It was just ajumping. The radio went out. Just a dead stop."

The funny light stopped on cue and began bobbing down "like a balloon on a string" until it was level with them. When the curious light moved towards them their own curiosity turned to panic. The English novelist E. M. Forster calls panic a "physical fear". The body decides to run, usually downhill, while the mind tumbles after. The folks on Bush Road couldn't take to their heels, it was all happening too quick, but they had their reactions. Brenda began to scream, as only teenage girls can. Mrs. Demcie gave orders "Let's get the hell out of here." Brad, who no doubt had tried to restart the car, tried again and this time, with panic in the car, some of it his own – "I wasn't scared till you women started screaming" - the engine came back to life with an odd whine. He stepped on the gas and fishtailed out of there. They last saw the light bouncing from side to side of Bush Road.

Kay thought they were being observed "as if through a giant microscope" -

"I had the feeling something was looking at us. Of course, that can only be a feeling. But I really had a feeling something was watching us.

"I didn't cast its light, yet it was like a spotlight, right on us. Just as if they had a spotlight right on us. I had this deep, deep conviction that we were being watched."

It's only by expectation that aliens become involved in the Bush Road incident. There isn't even a machine for them to ride in. George Hutchison describes Kay as "a witty and rational woman who prides herself on not going overboard on stuff like this" and she is being rational. Lights - in her grey-haired experience - are not intelligent or curious in themselves and machines don't put themselves together. Intelligent aliens may not be visible but they must be in the wings because intelligence tracks that way.

Still, Kay's parting words to George Hutchison seem a bit of a stretch - "I wonder what they thought we were." Here she is wondering what UFO aliens are thinking of them on the basis of an encounter with a bobbing blue light.

#### - DOWN ON THE FARM -

I came across the short article "UFO visits farm" in The Free Press on July 12. Joe Borda owned a tobacco farm near the town of Mount Pleasant in the Brantford area. He was in the farmhouse Sunday morning looking out a window when he saw a "shiny dome" arching above the green tobacco. Joe figured it was 400 yards away and at that distance it might be in his neighbors' field, so he came to the easy but uncertain conclusion that it was "a shiny truck or tank doing some spraying." The next time he looked it was gone and he forgot all about the shiny dome.

Tuesday Joe happened to be in the area and he walked into "a circular section of burned and flattened tobacco plants about 20 feet in diameter." On the ground in the circle there were traces of "a greeny-blue oily substance." "In thirty-five years of growing tobacco here I've never seen anything like this," he told the reporter. The reporter wasn't the first to check out the crop circle, the O.P.P. had been by, leaving with some of the oily stuff in a bottle.

The story left me with a couple questions so a month later I phoned. Mrs. Borda answered, Joe was out, but she sounded neigh-

borly I asked her the questions on my mind. Could you still see the circle? She said there was still a "distinct impression" even though the tobacco had started growing again from "suckers". Had the O.P.P. told them anything about the oily substance? They'd been promised a call but she had finally phoned and reached someone "in the lab" who told her the oil was nothing to worry about, that it was "just machine oil". She laughed. While it may have been machine oil of a sort it wasn't just machine oil; she'd been trying to get that out of Joe's overalls for thirty-five years.

The circle was filling in with the growth of new shoots on the flattened stems. In the normal course of events these suckers would be picked so the leaves would grow larger but in the circle the leaves had been burned and the suckers were quite ready to grow. This suggests the shiny dome had come down and hovered before going up again.

Joe saw a fantastic machine from his farmhouse window. It was a simple structure that transmitted energy and it seems to have come out of the blue and left a crop circle behind.

#### - UP MUSKOKA WAY -

**I**n the October 9 Free Press there was a report filed from Bracebridge, which is east of Georgian Bay, involving another farmer and his interrupted journey.

Muskoka is a place of lakes and rocks and endless trees yet among them there are a few farms. Robert Suffern owned one and his sister lived on a farm nearby. Early one evening his sister phoned; she'd seen a "reddish glow" in the sky and was worried it might be the reflection of a fire on the ground. From his porch Robert saw nothing out of the ordinary but he decided to go for a drive to check things out.

His drive took him down a cottage road along Three Mile Lake. This time of year the cottages were boarded up and the boats had been put in the boathouses. He didn't expect to see anything but he came around a turn in the road and found a flying saucer hovering above the road right in front of him -

"The ship was 12 to 14 feet across, nine feet high and circular in shape. There was a black strip running around the circumference and what appeared to be a small platform at the bottom."

Robert didn't see any creature that may have used the lowered platform. He may have come upon the scene too early or too late.

In any case the platform quickly retracted and that saucer took off -

"There was no dust raised, no apparent thrust, nothing. It went straight up and over the trees."

After a few minutes stopped on the cottage road Robert drove on and as he was cresting a hill he had to hit the brakes a second time to avoid hitting "some sort of creature" on the road. The creature was a spaceman, a fender-high humanoid dressed in a silver spacesuit and wearing a globe-shaped helmet. The helmet obscured any closer view of the creature within. Spaceman reacted to his presence by taking a few steps "sort of like a midget" and vaulting a fence. Robert drove on and was passing by a small lake and almost home when he saw the saucer flying away.

"I mean what do you do if they come to the door . . . offer them a beer?" were his parting words to the reporter. Extra-terrestrials would no doubt be thirsty after a long trip and Robert was willing to offer them a cold one. If that doesn't bring them down you have to wonder if there isn't some basic obstacle. Perhaps UFO aliens are not living beings at all. They certainly don't live in Canada. Spaceman makes me think of a puppet with invisible strings and that's another definition of creature. So what sort of creature are we dealing with?

The first meaning of creature is "a living being" but another meaning in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary is "puppet". Then creature means a spokesman or representative who gives up any personal opinion to express and endorse the opinion of another, as in A is the creature of B. If the UFO alien is a true puppet then there's still a B pulling the strings but A - the alien - has no personal opinion to express and no stories of a family left behind on other worlds. And all we really have in an encounter is the alien's physical reality and our opinion of their true nature. Aliens could be very convincing puppets and we just give them too much credit. It fits the UFO facts to at least entertain the idea of dummies on a mission, puppets acting things out but not thinking them up or thinking them through.

If the UFO aliens aren't in charge we can no longer look to them for the answer. They'll never stop for a beer. It isn't in their nature. The aliens instead become part of the question - What intelligence would take the shapes of lights, machines and humanoid creatures and remain unknown?

There are three questions we regularly ask about UFOs - What are they? Where do they come from? What are they doing here? If we could answer any one of these it might open the door. I had a new idea of what they were, substituting an unknown intelligence capable of taking three basic shapes for the extra-terrestrial setup of



a light coming from a machine run by aliens. Here I seemed to reach a dead end for where would such a thing come from? After asking this question more than a few times I had the idea to look for UFOs in evolution. This may not sound like an inspired idea since it could be said about anything. Everything has a past. It was stating the obvious. And it certainly helped that I knew very little about the subject. I'd be starting from scratch as I had with UFOs but at least I had a place to start. In a Victorian literature course at Western I'd heard about their great debate over the causes of evolution. It seemed less of a debate and more of a brawl and with only a basic knowledge of science or religion I had no desire to find out any more. Now I had a hunch I might find a theory of evolution with a place for the UFO. No matter where the UFO came from it evolved there to become what we witness here today in Southwestern Ontario. I just had to find the right theory, the one with a place for an unknown intelligence capable of taking the shapes of lights, machines and puppet creatures.

## 2

### - EVOLUTION -

Now I had a second purpose for my visits to City Lights. Most books about evolution were in the Science section - there was even a shelf with a handwritten sign. The first book I bought was Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* and I soon realized it wouldn't be the easy reading of UFO stories.

Evolution means gradual change. For much of our history it wasn't of great concern. Not until the scientific discoveries of the eighteenth century in geology and paleontology - rocks and fossils - did we begin to appreciate how very old our earth was. Scientists began to suggest physical laws to explain these past changes and after Charles Darwin published his book [1859] they came to be popularly viewed as an alternative to the prevalent Christian explanation written down in the Book of Genesis.

The word evolution has its own story to tell. "Evolos" is an ancient Greek word, reportedly used during cult rituals. It translates "Come forth!" The mystery remains as to who or what was revealed as portals opened and curtains were drawn back. In the Roman world, as in the Greek, books came in the shape of scrolls that evolved or unrolled to reveal the message inside.

Evolution had a hidden potential even if science was defining it as a system of physical laws and means. This gave me hope but hope was wearing thin as time and books on evolution went slowly by with no sign of the signs of UFOs. Then one afternoon I went into City Lights. I stopped to check out the front of the counter expecting to find it piled high and unstable with books waiting to be priced and shelved. It must have been a quiet day because the counter was cleared and there were only two small hardcover books. As I looked them over I had to believe in fate since they were both about evolution. One was titled *Life and Habit* and the other *Luck, or Cunning - As the Main Means of Organic Modification? - An attempt to throw additional light on Darwin's theory of Natural Selection*.

I'd heard Samuel Butler's name in the same Victorian literature course that steered me away from evolution. At the beginning of his writing career he made his mark with the Utopian novel *Erewhon*. In it a young explorer ventures over a range of mountains and discovers a human society where things have evolved on a different trajectory than for the Victorians. Machines, for example, had been

stopped in their tracks a couple centuries earlier for fear of them taking over. As a result the explorer's watch is seen with wonder and fear. Butler's classic growing up Victorian novel, *The Way of All Flesh*, wasn't published until after his death in 1902. Between these works of fiction Butler studied questions of art and literature and he became involved in the current debate over evolution and the heated arguments whirling up around it.

I got Marc's attention, paid a few dollars and went home. I started with *Life and Habit*. Halfway through the chapter "Instinct as Inherited Memory" I read -

"Customs and machines are instincts and organs now in process of development; they will assuredly one day reach the unconscious state of equilibrium..."

I read on, enough to realize Butler wasn't talking about UFOs, and then all I could do was read few these words over and over. The essences of the UFO had just landed in my lap. As much as I understood Butler, having read half a book at the time, instinct would be on the mind side of things and organ would be on the matter side. The pieces of the UFO fell into place. A human instinct, if we had one, would be unconscious, that is, we wouldn't be consciously aware of our involvement, just as we are not consciously aware of using our eyes to see or various organs to circulate blood through our body. We would however be conscious of the organic shapes of customs and machines outside of us. The machines would be unusual yet we'd still recognize them as structures transmitting energy. And what would our custom look like? Customs are our common ways of acting and every sociable thing we do. How could all these actions be given an organic shape? A humanoid puppet would be the perfect way. These puppets would have to express all of our customs so they'd come in all humanoid shapes and sizes. Butler doesn't mention the third shape I was looking for - funny lights - but UFO lights, as we saw on Bush Road, have a habit of following along. I was getting ahead of myself - and ahead of Butler - but three out of four wasn't bad.

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# 3

## - BUTLER'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION -

In 1859 Samuel Butler left university and his religious family for the other end of the earth, England for New Zealand. In his luggage he had a copy of Charles Darwin's new book. There would be lots of time for reading on the voyage.

By the time he reached New Zealand Butler was enthusiastic about Darwin's ideas. He saw the obvious parallel between natural selection and human progress inventing machines in the Industrial Age. He wondered – far ahead of his time – about machines evolving on their own once we had set them up and eventually becoming a species which wouldn't need our species. He also found it interesting to think of machines as a shape for human evolution. In any case our evolution wasn't going on in the natural world but in a human world, a world set into a world like a stone set in a ring.

“Machines are limbs which we make, and carry outside our bodies instead of incorporating them within.”

“Machines are the way in which the human organism becomes more highly developed. The Australian savage has no extra-corporeal limbs except a rug and a javelin; the nineteenth-century Englishman supplements his physique with organs such as an umbrella, a watch, a penknife; and if he be a really well-developed specimen of the race, he will be furnished with a large box upon wheels, two horses and a coachman.”

Butler thought evolution was “patent to plain people.” The world was old enough for gradual change and the development of all the plants and animals around us. When he returned to London in '64 he must have wondered where all the plain people had gone. The debate over the causes of evolution was at high volume. You could hardly hear Big Ben.

The debate raged between the scientific logic of the Darwinists and the dogmatic beliefs of the Christian church. The church put the mind of God at the beginning and matter fell into place. Science put matter and its laws at the beginning and mind was the noise the physical machine of evolution was starting to make.

Butler came to believe there was a missing debate – one for the plain people. It would involve both mind and matter and wouldn't

be an either-or choice. Evolution and design were both "patent to plain people."

"According to Darwin we may have evolution, but are on no account to have it as mainly due to intelligent effort, guided by ever higher and higher range of perceptions, sensations and ideas. We are to set it down to the shuffling of cards, or the throwing of dice, without the play, and this will never stand."

Henry Festing Jones, Butler's biographer, described his friend's dilemma - "Butler revolted against the idea that the universe was without intelligence... But where was the architect of the universe? He could not return to the Jewish and Christian idea of God designing his creatures from outside; he saw, however, no reason why the intelligence shouldn't be inside..."

The cornerstone of Butler's theory of evolution is the unity of the basic things we call mind and matter. He called them "helpmeets to one another". They are helpmeets in everything around us -

"Atoms have a mind as much smaller and less complex than ours as their bodies are smaller and less complex. Complex mind involves complex matter and vice versa."

Mind and matter have been helpmeets since the start and evolution has made the relationship more complex. Even though we like to see the human mind as unique, that's our vanity and ego -

"Animals and plants cannot understand our business, so we have denied that they can understand their own. What we call inorganic matter cannot understand the animals' and plants' business, we have therefore denied that it can understand anything whatever."

Butler suggested a very different perspective - "Mind and matter form one another, i.e. they give to one another the form in which we see them. They are the helpmeets to one another that cross each other and undo each other and, in the undoing do, and, in the doing, undo, and so see-saw ad infinitum."

Mind and matter have never been apart just as they are not apart in us. There is an evolving combination in cosmic evolution, an evolving combination in natural evolution and now a new combination in us. The balance of mind and matter changes but the hyphen between them remains constant. At first the matter side holds firm but gradually the mind exerts its own pressure and evolution teeters towards mind.

Butler came across a theory that surfaced out the scientific community a couple generations earlier called Lamarckism. It was associated with three men; two aristocratic and French, the Chevalier de Lamarck and the Comte de Buffon, and one English doctor, Dr.

Erasmus Darwin, Charles' grandfather. Butler would call these older men the Apostles of Cunning and set them in opposition to Charles Darwin and his followers, the Apostles of Luck.

The Apostles of Cunning spoke for the unity of mind and matter and the continuity of evolution -

"By making their variations mainly due to effort and intelligence the older men made organic development run on all-fours with human progress, and with inventions which we have watched growing up from small beginnings. They made the development of man from the amoeba part and parcel of the story that may be read though on an infinitely smaller scale in the development of our most powerful marine engines from the common kettle, or of our finest microscopes from the dew-drop. The development of the steam engine and the microscope is due to intelligence and design, which did indeed utilize chance suggestions, but which improved on these, and directed each step of their accumulation... And so it is, according to the older view of evolution, with the development of those living organs, or machines, that are born with us, as part of... our bodies."

Butler published four books on evolution as well an essay, *The Deadlock in Darwinism*. Besides the two books I found at City Lights that day - *Life and Habit* and *Luck, or Cunning?* - there was *Evolution, Old and New*, about the opposing Apostles, and another called *Unconscious Memory*. In the latter he examines the idea that in the course of evolution mind-matter becomes instinct-organ. Instinct is an evolved state of mind and organ is an evolved state of matter.

On the mind side of the hyphen there's a process that changes conscious effort into an instinct. Instinct is "reason become habitual", unconscious memory, something well learned. We can witness this process in the things we do everyday.

If you know how to play the piano you're familiar with the learning curve that begins with the basics, ascends with practice and repetition and finally lands with a familiarity we couldn't imagine at the beginning. Playing the piano has become second nature. Looking at a genius like Glenn Gould we can say he knows the piano so well he no longer knows that he knows it. What was once the subject of consciousness and effort is now unconscious and seemingly effortless. The only thing Glenn Gould couldn't do on the piano was go back to the basics. Butler saw this as a pattern traced in the mind; individual in the case of Glenn Gould but also a hint of an overarching learning curve and its completion when we land amidst our machines and customs with a familiarity we couldn't imagine at the beginning.

On the matter side of the hyphen there's physical organization. Nature evolved the incredible complexity of the human eye in conjunction with our instinct of understanding and interpreting the results. A natural organ, like a machine, is a structure transmitting energy, which in this case is a natural instinct. Butler pointed out, since mind becomes increasingly important in the course of evolution, "the organ more remote from protoplasm is at once more special, more an object of our consciousness and less an object of it own." A human instinct will have an appropriately human organ, an organ more special than a natural organ, more of an object of human consciousness and less of a natural object.

Human evolution is as different from natural [organic] evolution as natural evolution is different from cosmic [inorganic] evolution. Each has evolved from the evolution before. Each has its range of perceptions, sensations and ideas. Our mission is not to develop more natural instincts and organs, we didn't need another eye or circulatory system, but to develop our own, which we are doing in our customs and machines. These are the shapes of human evolution and when we have worked out these expressions, they'll be our instincts and organs -

"Every instinct must have gone through the laboriously intelligent stages through which human civilizations *and mechanical* inventions are now passing; and he who would study the origin of an instinct with its development, partial transmission, further growth, further transmission, approach to more unreflecting stability, and finally, its perfection as an unerring and unerringly transmitted instinct, must look to laws, customs and machinery as his best instructors. Customs and machines are instincts *and organs* now in process of development; they will assuredly one day reach the unconscious state of equilibrium which we observe in the structures and instincts of bees and ants, and an approach to which may be found among some savage nations. We may reflect however, not without pleasure, that this condition - the true millennium - is still distant."

According to Butler the end game of human evolution is ten thousand years in the future. It will take that long for us to change the conscious and hands-on relationship we currently have with customs and machines into an instinctive and organic connection. It will be our "true millennium" yet somehow we end up going back to a mental condition reminiscent of primitive tribes in the jungle, or even further back into the unconscious "social" lives of ants and bees. So how on earth did intelligence and design in evolution end up sliding backwards?

Though Butler says little more about our future I found a brief sketch of what it might be like -

"It has been said a day will come when the Polar ice shall have accumulated, till it forms vast continents many thousands of feet above the level of the sea, all of solid ice. The weight of this mass will, it is believed, cause the world to topple over on its axis, so that the earth will be upset as an ant-heap overturned by a ploughshare. In that day the icebergs will come crunching against our proudest cities, razing them from the face of the earth as though they were made of rotten blotting-paper... Then shall a scared remnant escape in places, and settle upon the changed continent when the waters have subsided - a simple people, busy hunting shellfish on the drying ocean beds, and with little time for introspection; yet they can read and write and sum, for by that time these accomplishments will have become universal, and will be acquired as easily as we now learn to talk; but they do so as a matter of course, and without self-consciousness. Also they make the simpler kinds of machinery too easily to be able to follow their own operations - the manner of their own apprenticeship being to them as a buried city. May we not imagine that, after the lapse of another ten thousand years or so, some one of them may again become cursed with the lust of introspection, and a second Harvey may astonish the world by discovering that it can read and write, and that steam-engines do not grow, but are made? It may safely be prophesied that he will die a martyr, and be honored in the fourth generation."

I'm not sure how climate change got into Butler's story but those that were left seem doomed anyway - future-primitives lost in a lost world -

A day in a life would start with children running to the beach looking for some shellfish and treasures. Along the way they pass a heap of shells and they all know how many shells there are down to the half-shell. There's no calculation. A few find pieces of driftwood and write proverbs and equations in the wet sand. There's no reflection. A storm has opened a cave and the children discover a book encased in a copper tube for returns to the old London Public Library. Of course everyone can read the book and they're likely to believe the contents but it's public chance as to what book will turn up. Mystery they've got and Self-Help they need. As for their "organic" machines the future-primitives fall into a trance and find the necessary materials to make a simple machine with no idea of what they are making or if it will be of any use. I imagine a future-primitive coming to consciousness and being puzzled to find a machine for opening shells



in his lap and I imagine his neighbor equally puzzled by a loaded shotgun.

If the future-primitives last ten thousand years a second Harvey will see the light of day. The first Harvey was Dr. William Harvey, an early English medical doctor credited with discovering the circulation of blood in the body. Natural evolution had long ago discovered and perfected this system of instinct and organs and Harvey discovered it a second time by telling us how it worked. The second Harvey will discover a human system of instinct and organs and tell the future-primitives how it is they can read and write and sum the easy way they do and why they keep tripping over machines that have run out of energy. Yet it won't be good news for them to hear their present burdens and confusions are the signs of a human inheritance. Butler knows the second Harvey will be in for a rough ride. While we didn't kill the first Harvey, chances are the future-primitives will be in the mood to use the shotgun and eliminate the second, so he will die a martyr and be honored in the fourth generation.

The future-primitives are all doomed and kill the messenger because Butler weighs them down with more natural evolution. They may walk around but they "run on all fours." He forgets that not only will human shapes be different from natural shapes but our intent or purpose will be different as well. Our instinct will be our own. There's no human purpose behind Butler's prediction and this, as Butler said of Darwin, "will never stand." What is our human instinct? Our instinct must do more than fashion the organic shapes of customs and machines and idly run them; it must be doing something a little more human with them.

# 4

## - EVOLUTION REVISITED -

Evolution may be gradual change but there have been dramatic events, as the modern biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky reminds us in his book *The Biology of Ultimate Concern* -

“Cosmic evolution transcended itself when the first living cells appeared... Biological evolution transcended itself and gave rise to mankind.”

To transcend is to climb over both physical and mental barriers. Used in the eighteenth century to describe a physical journey over a range of mountains, we use it today to describe a mental breakthrough or eureka moment. How is it possible for something to “transcend itself”? It’s a mystery to me how to even describe it. At first I thought it had to be something coming down out of the blue but the “itself” part of the description made me think of transcendence as a calling forth or fulfillment of the evolution that’s gone on before. In any case it seems to have happened here on earth when the first living cells appeared out of cosmic evolution and when the first humans appeared out of nature.

Then I came across transcendence in a description of evolution from an Eastern point of view -

“According to the Hindu theory of evolution, nothing is superadded in the course of evolution, but what is only potentially existing becomes unfolded. The whole of the tree potentially exists in the seed.

“Take the mineral kingdom, for instance. There is God there; there is life, and there is consciousness. But this life and consciousness remain covered by the darkness of matter. In the vegetable kingdom we find, though darkness of matter predominates, that there is a certain release of life and consciousness... In the lower animal kingdom we find consciousness predominates, but there is not evolved self-consciousness... In man is evolved self-consciousness. A God-man again transcends the sense of ego, the ego which limits the infinite consciousness or God in man.”

According to Swami Prabhavananda there have been a number of transcendent events in the course of evolution and the last is still underway.

The sage or holy-man transcends the ego, our small sense of who we are and our desire to own and occupy - “I am what is mine.”

"The self [ego] is made by projection and introspection, to have a self is to have enemies, and to be a self is to be at war," wrote Norman O. Brown.

In his book *The Nature of Man According to the Vedanta*, John Levy said -

"The ego... is the outcome of the mistaken identification of self and body. There can be no irreversible peace until the ego, or I-thought, is seen for what it is, namely, a mere notion, a bad habit, and the object of consciousness."

The Swami sees human evolution fulfilled in - "a Christ, a Buddha, a Ramakrishna, children of light, light themselves". Another Indian writer, Aubrey Menen, describes how it happens - "After long experience of nonjudgment, the mind (or the soul, the spirit, or what have you - the sages never settled that question) suddenly transcends itself. It arrives at an immense tranquility. You are no longer yourself, but a new being, free from all worldly contamination. The world, of course, is still there, and so are your selves. You survey (the ego), but with a neutral eye. This is the aim of the sages, and the end of their teachings."

If we have this potential of transcendence within us any instinct-organ we evolved would transcend as well. Add transcendence to Butler's theory and we're no longer looking for dead machines on the ground but lively machines in the air; no longer are we looking for customs to appear at our dumb fingertips but customs being acted out at arm's length.

Transcendent machines would be structures transmitting energy but these odd machines would transcend the "laws of nature". It would be difficult to imagine them except our neighbors have come forward with their stories of UFOs. Joe told us about a shiny dome appearing out of nowhere and transmitting enough energy to burn and flatten a few of his tobacco plants and Robert described a flying saucer going "straight up and over the trees without raising any dust."

Butler said we should be on the lookout for our customs to appear in an organic shape. He thinks our instinct for custom will turn out to be an internalized ability to read and write and sum but these are only the beginnings of custom - and where is the organic shape? The future-primitives' instinct for custom depends on the heap of shells, a piece of driftwood and a book that might be discovered. Their instinct for machines has them unconsciously make simple machines but without any knowledge of what it's for or how to keep it going. It will either be thrown in a heap with others or become a dreadful

fetish. Transcendent custom, on the other hand, could take us to the level of our customs being acted out by humanoid puppet creatures – creatures of custom. We've heard about one UFO alien - a small spaceman dressed as we would dress if we were visiting another planet that takes a few midget steps and vaults a fence as if transcendence were part of its nature. Is spaceman acting out something for Robert?

Butler was waiting for the true millennium. He thought it must be ten thousand years away. The sages tell us transcendence has always been our potential. Butler yokes human evolution to natural time; the sages, from experience, don't make that mistake. If we then find the fulfillment of Butler's theory alive and well today it suggests the sages were right. Human time transcends natural time. The true millennium has always been here and now.

What is our human instinct? Isn't it our quest to know ourselves by finding our transcendent human nature? Isn't the question we're always asking, consciously or unconsciously, "Who am I?"

# 5

- PROOF -

The proof of the instinct-organ theory must be in how well it explains the strange story of UFOs. I can only suggest how UFO encounters show us our individual and collective sense of ego-identity.

Flying over the Brantford area in the summer of '75 you would have noticed a black circle in a bright green field. From up there it would look like a brand, as if it had been "burned with a hot iron... in proof of ownership," like a cow or a horse.

Who owns the farm down below? Joe Borda is his name and he's been growing tobacco for thirty-five years. The farm is his personal property. There's a physical connection and a mental connection as Norman O. Brown points out in *Love's Body* -

"The boundaries of our property are extended by mixing our persons with things, and this is the essence of the labor process."

What happens to Joe's tobacco? It's branded - burned and flattened. Which is not so very different from what will happen. In a couple months these plants would have been flattened and hung up in kilns to dry. In time the tobacco would burn. So the essential results are the same inside and outside the crop circle. The difference is the time it takes for these customary results to happen, the rest of the season or a few minutes on a Sunday morning. Sunday was a day of rest for Joe but not for his sense of identity with his farm and not for the UFO on its mission to point this out. There's an echo that morning of the old Greek *Evolos!* - Come forth! As Joe looked out his farmhouse window the scene briefly jarred loose from the natural order of things and focused on the human order of things.

It follows livestock mutilations illuminate life and death on the ranch. The rancher identifies with his animals the way Joe identified with his tobacco. Then one morning he walks into his pasture and stumbles upon an animal that has suffered a strange death, showing surgical cuts and parts actually removed and taken. It's gruesome but so was the fate awaiting it; and now it doesn't have to wait, just as the tobacco in the circle didn't have to wait, now that custom has touched down under cover of darkness as it did on a sunny Sunday morning.

This seems the place to tell the local story of a phantom helicopter on an old tannery roof. A month after this strange event took place I sat at the kitchen table talking to one of the two young men who wit-

nessed it. It was a sunny summer day, a Saturday, and they'd walked uptown from their homes in West London. After a few hours wandering around it was time to head home. They went north on Richmond and just before the C.P.R. tracks turned west on Mill Street. Between Mill and the tracks stood the Hyman Tannery.

The Hyman Tannery was a strange building perhaps three stories high with a black peaked roof and made of our local yellow brick. What made it odd was the fact that the windows consisted of five or six long and narrow vertical slits in the brick wall. This made it look like a castle or a church but for a hundred years it had been a working tannery. It was closed now; the windows were boarded up, though it hardly seemed necessary, and the large wrought-iron gates that opened on Mill Street were chained shut. There was no one around. As they were walking by a flash of light caught their attention. It was a reflection from a large "helicopter" blade spinning a few feet above the peaked roof. They watched as a "cabin" took shape beneath the spinning blade, that is, it tried to take shape and then "you could see right through it". You could, for a split second, see a figure inside. The cabin went through this coming and going a couple more times and then it and the blade both vanished. It seemed that he and his friend were the only witnesses, there was no one nearby on Mill and no rear-enders on Richmond, and so they'd kept it to themselves.

A phantom helicopter on an old tannery roof puts the spotlight on a collective sense of ego-identity. The tannery business wasn't so much the business of the teenage witnesses as it was our business. It was part of London's custom and culture for a hundred years and closing it didn't change the fact. There was something in the place not yet ready to leave and lingering on like the occasional smell of rotten leather, a collective sense of ego and what had gone before. The blades inside may have stopped in natural time but the blade outside kept turning.

The instinct-organ theory suggests a possible explanation for those scary UFO "physicals". When witnesses are taken aboard flying saucers the aliens often submit them to a physical exam. Since we identify rather closely with our physical body this is an intrusion and no fun at all. Yet this "mistaken identity" may be responsible for the physical in the first place.

"The crucial bit of property is neither nature [land] nor natural produce, nor factories, nor manufactured products, but persons, our own persons."

Norman O. Brown wrote this in the sixties and a hundred years earlier Butler made a similar observation -

"What property is to a man's mind or soul that his body is also, only more so. The body is property carried to the bitter end or property is body carried to the bitter end, whichever the reader chooses."

To reveal this ego-identity the aliens wear white robes and use an assortment of machines and bright lights, which coincides with our custom of physical exams. Alien "doctors" – and we can't forget the "technicians" – are efficient and impassive, with no training in bedside manners and no sign of sympathy in their unreflecting eyes, then what can you expect from dummies on a mission.

Encounters also come down on the mental side of our ego-identity. I came across the following example in the close encounter of Betty Hill. She and her husband Barney were the witnesses in John Fuller's famous book *The Interrupted Journey*. They are taken aboard a saucer and given physical exams. Barney refuses to accept the situation and sits with his eyes closed. Betty is indignant and keeps her eyes wide open.

After her physical Betty is led into a small room where she waits with one of the alien creatures. She has the feeling the worst is over and she and Barney will soon be heading home. She won't tell her friends about the time they spent at Niagara Falls but the story of what happened in the White Mountains. It will be amazing. Yet without something tangible, some proof, who will believe her? It's then Betty sees a "fairly big book" on a metal table. The alien sees her interest and asks her if she wants it. Does she want it? Of course she does. It's just the thing that would convince the folks at the government social office where she works. "Can you read it?" the alien asks. Betty opens it up. It's full of numbers, strange letters and diagrams. Of course she can't read it but that doesn't matter. Somebody back home in Portsmouth will figure it out. The book is the important thing and she carries it around the room. "This was my proof," she'd say to the hypnotist, "this was my proof that this happened." It's the medium, the delivery system, the book itself and not the message inside that's reality to her.

The aliens decide to take the book back. Betty holds on tight but they wrestle it away and without the book she begins to forget their interrupted journey.

Another UFO story revealing a mental point of view was reported by a ham radio operator. He went for a walk late one night to stretch his legs and he heard a voice saying "Stay where you are," and "Don't be afraid." The witness wasn't afraid but he was impressed. The voice was coming from all around him. It put him in the centre of acoustic space. It's a question of life and habit as Walter J. Ong, S.J.

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says in *The Presence of the Word* -

"Habits of auditory synthesis give rise to a special sense of space itself. For besides visual-tactile space there is also acoustic space... Space thus apprehended has qualities of its own. It is not spread out in front of us as a field of vision but diffused around us," adding, "It is inhabited space."

A ham radio operator lives and identifies in that space at home so what more convincing proof could there be than a voice in surround-sound? Space really is inhabited.

These incidents remind me of two "mental places" named by the Canadian media guru Marshall McLuhan. Betty Hill would live in the Gutenberg Galaxy, a place where written books are important gauges of truth, and the ham radio operator would live in the Global Village, where shared sound is most important. Betty isn't able to read the message inside but the fact it's in a book is her proof. The book is her message. The proof for the ham radio operator isn't in the words he hears but in the sound of a voice that is all around him. The voice is his message.

So the book and the voice are the medium, the message and their proof of reality. Butler predicted the evolved organ would be less an object of its own and more an object of mind and that shines a light on our UFO encounters. The UFO is physical and leaves physical traces behind but proof remains elusive, personal and relative.



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- CONCLUSION -

Our neighbors in Ontario who report seeing UFOs are not talking twaddle. There's nothing silly, senseless or trifling about an encounter with a UFO. It's something they will remember for the rest of their lives. They might also remember that the scientists who dismiss UFOs and the church-goer who might demonize them both have systems of thought that stand in the way of our understanding them. However you look at it, UFOs are ours to discover.

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THE END

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