

Oct. 28, 1957

Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger
307 Plymouth St.
Culber, Indiana

Dear Dr. Sprunger:

Thank you for your letter received last week, with enclosure from your friend, the physicist, which I am returning to you as you requested.

This letter is a good indication of a mental reaction of preconception. There are so few open minds in the world today. When cement once hardens it takes an automatic drill to break it up.

I hope we can have another good talk before too long. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

William S. Sadler

WSS/ar

(Copy of a letter sent to Dr. Sprunger
from a physicist, Ritchie D. Mikesell
Univ. of Illinois, Champaign, Ill.)

204 E. John St.
Champaign, Ill.
October 21, 1957

Dear Dr. Sprunger:

I was contacted by your brother (-in-law?) today about the book that you loaned me last year. I will give it to him tomorrow.

I'm very sorry about being so negligent. I saw very little of the book last spring because I was very much overworked, none at all this summer, and had just started to take an interest in it this fall. My roommate this semester is a Ph.D. candidate in the philosophy department, and we frequently have discussions together. In one of these discussions I brought the book out, and we've been using it ever since.

I'll be quite frank with you -- this book has more absolute nonsense in it than any other single book I've ever seen. Furthermore, as a religious liberal who finds Christian theology almost completely untenable, this book seems especially ridiculous in that it retains most of these old ideas, adds very unlikely new ones, and tries to pass itself off as a "new revelation."

My roommate has commented:

1. The parts of the book which deal with factual knowledge can be found in elementary textbooks dealing with sociology, psychology, astronomy, biology, etc. and are certainly no revelation to anyone.
2. The use of terminology seems to be designed to arouse emotional responses independent of cognitive meaning (where there is cognitive meaning). To be more specific, the terminology is a curious mixture of that of science fiction and of Mormon theology.
3. It would be interesting to know what criteria were used by you to determine the authenticity of the material in the book.

Despite this rather severe criticism of the book, I hope that you will accept my thanks for the use of a very interesting book.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Ritchie Mikesell