

Journal of The Brotherhood of Man Library, an Information, Telecommunication and Lending Service Resource for Students of The URANTIA Book.

Nouveau-Assertiveness

Today in western culture, social values promote self-assertiveness. It is important to show oneself to be strong, independent, capable, to resist any type of domination. We learn to do our own thing, to make the best of most situations. It is the age of emancipation, of claiming one's rights, of demanding. It applies equally to all individuals—teen-agers, women, the crippled, the aged, low income people, all minority groups. Each individual and each group wants more rights. It also applies to nations and states.

Even though all these claims may be well justified and legitimate, it does create a great number of social tensions and inter-personal conflicts. This tendency to claim, to demand, and sometimes to even steal power, brings us close to various forms of anarchy. As one realizes that his/her demands are answered, or claims responded to, more and more rights and powers are claimed in a ceaseless battle for assertiveness. We enter the "to each for himself" world.

We must admit however that this kind of society, based largely on self-assertiveness, leaves less room for solidarity, co-operation, and brotherhood.

The old traditions of charity, respect, sacrifice, and forgiveness were essentially social values which people tended to obey without much real self-conviction or personal choice. They were basically social values and therefore greatly artificial. They did not endure.

Now came the era of liberation where individuals started asserting themselves and promoting individual rights. Personal values have tended to fluctuate, although largely leaning towards materialism and power. But the Spirit of Truth is functioning, the seraphim are at work and the powerful Thought Adjusters never grow weary.

This interim value crisis will have turned out to be a plus. It has ensured liberation from institutionalized values and made way for more personal sets of values. Presently we assert ourselves. Self is king. But personality assertiveness can only lead, in the end, to the recognition of the Source of all self, of all

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We have to note very carefully the word the Christian ethic uses for love. It is the word agape....It means an undefeatable attitude of goodwill; it means that no matter what the other man does to us we will never under any circumstances seek anything but his good.

William Barclay, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*

personality. Patience and insight are needed.

There is great need for truly religious individuals today—people led by spiritual growth and values producing love. This time, there is no question of trying to change global social values and moral standards, nor of condemning the sins of our time. This is not the way.

By the way they love, serve, and live in joyous submission to the love-filled will of the Father of us all, real religious individuals will progressively convert most of these liberated, newly-assertive individuals towards intense consecration to the fatherly love of God and the service of their new found brothers and sisters. Having liberated themselves from collective shallow values and morals, they will eventually the better choose, each for himself, to acknowledge the Father and submit to His will in pure joy.

Surface waves and ripples are not to be feared, even if short term effects are to be suffered. But when the heart has been touched, the soul mobilized, flood tides of permanent changes are created and soon, spiritual fruits appear.

The responsibility for the transformation of the world is individual and personal, while the consequences are collective—not the other way around.

Each one of us, sons and daughters of God by faith and by act, can, in fact must, become agents of transformation by our total life, total doings, total words, total thoughts.

If the transforming effects are to be enduring, they must first and foremost be deeply and definitely entrenched in our souls. Only then can our lives have any lasting effect on other lives. But never should we be worried or even interested in effects. Our mission is to grow, to get closer to God, and to learn to be better sons and daughters. All plentiful life will produce fruits in due season.

Only individuals who are **totally** consecrated to doing the Father's will can act as leaven. It is mainly by the way they live, by the power of their love, that they can convert the heart of those newly-assertive individuals, each already spirited by a mighty Thought Adjuster, to finally find their Father and acknowledge their brothers and sisters.

We have witnessed the short-lived effects of mass movements. Soon we will see the lasting effects of living faith as it penetrates deeply into the hearts and souls of people who crave for sure values and authentic spiritual experience.

It may well be that assertiveness must precede freewilled submission to, and joyful acceptance of, the will of God, the Source of all assertiveness. Through submission to LOVE by love, we will, one day, all assert ourselves in Him.

Jacques Tetrault, Quebec, Canada

The plain truth is this; love is not a matter of getting what you want. Quite the contrary. The insistence on always having what you want, on always being satisfied, on always being fulfilled, makes love impossible.

....Love is not a deal, it is a sacrifice.

Thomas Merton, Love and Living

Cognitive Dissonance. Can The Urantia Book help?

Ann Bendall, BA, Dip. Psych. Australia

Cognitive dissonance is a state of mental confusion/conflict caused by having inconsistency between values and behavior.

Because nobody likes to live with constant inner turmoil, most folks will seek some way to resolve their inner conflict. And, most commonly, **rather than changing their established behavior patterns, they will modify their beliefs and values to make them consistent with their habitual actions.**

Why is it that we opt for change of behavior as an alternative to be avoided if at all possible? Perhaps the reason for this is that behavior is overt, public, conspicuous. If we change our behavior, other people will notice, and may not necessarily approve. We might get ostracized by our friends, members of the groups to which we belong, maybe even our family (similar to that which occurred in Jesus' life). So we simply change our values, or relegate them to a level of non-importance. We can do this in a number of ways, examples of which are:

1. We can say and believe that we truly want to do God's will. Jesus says the only way to do this is to love one another as he loves us. So we have to embrace this value. We might state that we know this is really the best way to behave, but it is really impractical and too idealistic in the current state of the development of this planet. Then we can feel comfortable once again in disliking lots of our brothers and sisters.
2. We rewrite the commandment to say - love the God within one another as Jesus loves us. Then we can happily go out, being really good Christians, being seen

to be so loving, loving God like mad every time we meet person, at the same time assuring ourselves that it is absolutely impossible for any normal loving person to love the individual themselves.

3. Now what if we were in a group which really wants to do God's will, knows Jesus' one commandment, but really feels the need, as part of our group identity, to disown a few people from the family of God? Simple! We can decide that these folks are decidedly non-moral. It is highly likely they have never made a single moral decision in their life, hence they cannot have a Thought Adjuster, they are not survival material, indeed, they are just an animal. Or perhaps the person is insane, so their Thought Adjuster and seraphim have headed for the mansion worlds long ago, complete with soul, personality - the whole box and dice of that person - and we are only dealing with the human shell. Alternatively, from reading *The Urantia Book* very carefully, we conclude this person is totally iniquitous. All that the Ancients of Days are waiting for is for the human vehicle to stop functioning, and then any remaining vestige of that person is *finito*. They already are dead; they just wont lie down.

Through the process of changing our values and beliefs, we can concoct an infinity of stories to ensure that our behavior will remain unchanged. Then, with behavior agreeing with values, we will have no conflict and no cognitive dissonance. Unfortunately, a concomitant result of such a decision is that we will have no growth!

It seems so much easier to continue with our current behavior, and have our friends and group members feel smug and comfortable. It is much harder to say, "I have decided to love the sinner and hate the sin. As a matter of fact, I have decided to become a mercy minister, just like Jesus, and opt for it being an error rather than a sin". We could lose our friends by such a stance!

Setting our moral ideals too high

"The sense of guilt (not the consciousness of sin) comes either from interrupted spiritual communion or from the lowering of one's moral ideals. Deliverance from such a predicament can only come through the realization that one's highest moral ideals are not necessarily synonymous with the will of God. Man cannot hope to live up to his highest ideals, but he can be true to his purpose of finding God and becoming more and more like him." (1133).

Sometimes we set our personal standards for achievement too high. We are constantly failing—not behaving as we would wish to. We may have been striving for a perfection which we simply cannot achieve at this point in time.

Rather than experiencing disappointment, we can realistically resolve our cognitive dissonance by setting achievable goals, or alternatively by establishing a series of lesser goals to finally reach our ultimate goal.

From Our Readers

I really enjoyed All of Vol.1, No. 1 of Innerface International, and agree most heartily with Ken Glasziou's viewpoints. It is the time for Change! The enclosed check is to cover a year's subscription plus another copy because I am sending my copy to a friend and I don't expect it will be returned.

Rosemary Eigenberger, WI, USA

I very much like the content of the articles of your first publication and look forward to reading more. I would also like at some time, to contribute, and will send some material for your consideration in the near future. Keep up the good work.

Francyl S. Gawryn USA

Thoroughly enjoyed the articles and up-to-date information, plus info regarding concentric circles and quotes.

Linda D May IN, USA

Please find enclosed \$10 being annual subscription for Innerface International. Thanks for sending me the journal—it means a lot to me as a Study Group has not yet been formed in my area. I'm looking forward to a year's good reading.

Elizabeth Brown, Haast, New Zealand

Great articles - I really enjoyed them! Inspiring, reasonable and full of good ideas.

Rick & Peachy Goebel CO, USA

Good to see this Dave. Enjoyed Ken Glasziou's insights in "A Time for Change?" and the article "On the Urgent Need for Secondary Works."

Richard Strickland, MI, USA

This spiritual growing can be really painful at times! We learn not to make it impossible.

Self-Deception

A decidedly ineffective way of resolving cognitive dissonance is to stifle or suppress the lesser value with a self-deceptive claim to adherence to the more spiritual value. Jesus gave advice on this technique:

"But let me warn you against the folly of undertaking to surmount temptation by the effort of supplanting one desire by another and supposedly superior desire through the mere force of the human will. If you would be truly triumphant over the temptations of the lesser and lower nature, you must come to that place of spiritual advantage where you have really and truly developed an actual interest in, and love for, those higher and more idealistic forms of conduct which your mind is desirous of substituting for these lower and less idealistic habits of behavior that you recognize as temptation. You will in this way be delivered through spiritual transformation rather than be increasingly overburdened with the deceptive suppression of mortal desires. The old and the inferior will be forgotten in the love for the new and the

superior. Beauty is always triumphant over ugliness in the hearts of all who are illuminated by the love of truth. There is mighty power in the expulsive energy of a new and sincere spiritual affection. And again I say to you, be not overcome by evil but rather overcome evil with good." (1738)

Behavior becomes Value

"Religious habits of thinking and acting are contributory to the economy of spiritual growth. One can develop religious predispositions toward favorable reaction to spiritual stimuli, a sort of conditioned spiritual reflex. Habits which favor religious growth embrace cultivated sensitivity to divine values, recognition of religious living in others, reflective meditation on cosmic meanings, worshipful problem solving, sharing one's spiritual life with one's fellows, avoidance of selfishness, refusal to presume on divine mercy, living as in the presence of God. The factors of religious growth may be intentional, but the growth itself is unvaryingly unconscious."(1095)

Long before psychologists were invented, the Catholic Church utilized cognitive dissonance to convert those who were not "believers". The Church knew that, even if a person did not have faith at the outset, if they behaved as if they did, eventually faith would follow. Hence, the Church set up a conflict between a person's belief system and their behavior, and more often than not behavior won out, with the result that the person became a practising Catholic.

This technique has not been lost on other religious organizations which also practice cognitive dissonance to win converts.

Cognitive Dissonance and Jesus

Let's face it there is not going to be any growth without pain. Have a look at Jesus's life. Boy did he know pain!

"Throughout this and the two following years Jesus suffered great mental distress as the result of his constant effort to adjust his personal views of religious practices and social amenities to the established beliefs of his parents. He was distraught by the conflict between the

The easy subservience of reason to prejudice and passion, and the consequent persistence of irrational egotism, particularly in group behaviour, makes social conflict an inevitability in human history, probably to its very end.

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*

PRAYERS OF A NAIVE GOD CHILD

Dear Father, please help me to see myself as you see me. It seems that lately, most of my day is spent denying the reality of me rather than accepting the fact that I am only a baby God child of the experiential breed. Please help me to stop oscillating between denial of the reality of myself and overmagnification of my imperfection.

urge to be loyal to his own convictions and the conscientious admonition of dutiful submission to his parents; his supreme conflict was between two great commands which were uppermost in his youthful mind. The one was: 'Be loyal to the dictates of your highest convictions of truth and righteousness.' The other was: 'Honor your father and mother, for they have given you life and the nurture thereof.' However, he never shirked the responsibility of making the necessary daily adjustments between these realms of loyalty to one's personal convictions and duty toward one's family, and he achieved the satisfaction of effecting an increasingly harmonious blending of personal convictions and family obligations into a masterful concept of group solidarity based upon loyalty, fairness, tolerance, and love." (1372)

Look at the price he paid for his beliefs and values! And above all, look at the price he paid for adhering to a firm belief in the giving of the utmost of respect for the free will of every person he knew, including the members of his family. He knew that, in his love for them, and theirs for him, he had a chance of persuading them; of swaying their opinion a little more in the direction of reality. He desisted. He awaited their making up their own minds. And he suffered.

Jesus personally knew all about conflict:

"Forewarn all believers regarding the fringe of conflict which must be traversed by all who pass from the life as it is lived in the flesh to the higher life as it is lived in the spirit. To those who live quite wholly within either realm, there is little conflict or confusion, but all are doomed to experience more or less uncertainty during the times of transition between the two levels of living. In entering the kingdom, you cannot escape its responsibilities or avoid its obligations, but remember: The gospel yoke is easy and the burden of truth is light." (1766)

Cognitive Dissonance is Natural

Despite the fact that, "All conflict is evil in that it inhibits the creative function of the inner life—it is a species of civil war in the personality" (1220), and that it causes lots of difficulty for our seraphim, "Much of my difficulty was due to the unending conflict between the two natures of my subject: the urge of ambition opposed by animal indolence; the ideals of a superior people crossed by the instincts of an inferior race;" (1223), conflict is, nevertheless—natural. Gosh, right from the time we are young children we have inner turmoil:

"Moral choosing is usually accompanied by more or less moral conflict. And this very first conflict in the child mind is between the urges of egoism and the impulses of altruism. The Thought Adjuster does not disregard the personality values of the egoistic motive but does operate to place a slight preference upon the altruistic impulse as leading to the goal of human happiness and to the joys of the kingdom of heaven." (1131).

"The progression of religious growth leads from stagnation through conflict to co-ordination." (1098)

"New religious insights arise out of conflicts which initiate the choosing of new and better reaction habits in the place of older and inferior reaction patterns. New meanings only emerge amid conflict; and conflict persists only in the face of refusal to espouse the higher values connoted in superior meanings." (1097)

"The religion of the spirit means effort, struggle, conflict, faith, determination, love, loyalty, and progress." (1729)

"Religious perplexities are inevitable; there can be no growth without psychic conflict and spiritual agitation. The organization of a philosophic standard of living entails considerable commotion in the philosophic realms of the mind. Loyalties are not exercised in behalf of the great, the good, the true, and the noble without a struggle. Effort is attendant upon clarification of spiritual vision and enhancement of cosmic insight. And the human intellect protests against being weaned from subsisting upon the nonspiritual energies of temporal existence. The slothful animal



Purging animal tendencies can be painful!

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself.

Ethel Barrymore

mind rebels at the effort required to wrestle with cosmic problem solving." (1097)

So it looks as if we cannot happily chant an affirmation like, "it is my will that Thy will be done," fold our arms in ecstatic pleasure and await the scenic ride to Paradise. Sorry! That is not the way to perfection. After deciding to make the decision that we truly want our will and God's will to be so alike that they cannot be individually identified, we have heaps of work to do for a long, long time to come. And we might as well get started.

I have decided that the best approach for me is, firstly to look at every value and belief I hold. All my attitudes towards me, others, life. All my beliefs as to what the world and others are in relation to me. I will have a wander down memory lane, at the same time bringing up to consciousness every relationship I have ever had, every impactful experience. Having done all of this, I will have a good look at each and every little thing. Each belief and value - how does it fit in with what I know Jesus and God would like me to be? And if my behavior needs modifying as a result of discovery of a lovely spiritual value placed in my being by my Thought Adjuster—then there will be CONFLICT and COGNITIVE DISSONANCE! I am going to "bite the bullet", hang on for dear life to Jesus and change the behavior.

Perhaps a number of my stories of my life to date need rewriting to have me portrayed in a more realistic light—rather than martyr-victim, or saint-hero? Are there any folks I might have been blaming for me and my life? Any folks that I have not forgiven? Any I do not love? Any situations which need a bit of gratitude extended to my Thought Adjuster, seraphim, Jesus, or the next door neighbor?

I may become upset as I face (with the help and love of my Thought Adjuster and the Spirit of Truth) certain rotten mistakes I have made in life. Jesus' kind words will come in handy then:

"Do not become discouraged by the discovery that you are human. Human nature may tend toward evil, but it is not inherently sinful. Be not downcast by your failure wholly to forget some of your regrettable experiences. The mistakes which you fail to forget in time will be forgotten in eternity. Lighten your burdens of soul by speedily acquiring a long-distance view of your destiny, a universe expansion of your career." (1739)

I am not going to rush over this. I have lifetimes to complete these tasks. I will take one value or belief at a

time and examine it objectively. I will discard the outdated one. I am not going to concern myself with what to replace it. My Thought Adjuster is waiting for me to discover its replacement—the spiritual value. I cannot discover it until I remove the garbage hiding it.

And although I will be disappointed in myself if I get cognitive dissonance and opt for the easy way out - keeping the old behaviour, value, belief, lack of mercy etc.—I know that my seraphim and Thought Adjuster will share my disappointment, that they have made careful note, and if it is really important for me to now discard the lesser behaviour, there will be heaps of cognitive dissonance, forcing me to adopt the spiritual value and change my behavior to accord with it. If the behavior is undesirable, but not greatly affecting my growth, I will trip through the rest of this life, conflict free in relation to that behavior, and as soon as I reach the mansion worlds there will be the cognitive dissonance to await me, all ready to be worked on in the aeons of time ahead.

DEFRAG.

O.Y. Gates, Letmein, Urantia

When computers store your letters and articles in memory so that you can get them back later, they really make a hash (mash?) of it. Storage is done as a file to a disk that is subdivided into sections. A bookkeeping system keeps an index and when you want your file back, you just type its name and press the magic button. However, the file isn't necessarily all in the one filing cabinet. When it is being stored, the librarian inside the computer goes looking for any spare space in partly filled cabinets and, being fastidious, insists on filling all vacant spaces with bits and pieces of your file. So your file actually gets stored all over the place. Eventually that makes the librarian's task slow and tedious. But a cure is at hand! Just type DEFRAG (which is short for *defragment*) and lo and behold, all the bits and pieces of all your files are put back together, are stored in one place, and the index is updated so it can be recovered swiftly and easily. It works like magic.

Now wouldn't it be great if human organizations could be defragmented in the same way? Whenever we human creatures come together into some kind of collective activity, it is not long before we start jockeying for position, power, prestige, possessions, anything by which we can feel special—superior to our fellows, or at least one (or maybe some) of them. Very quickly, whatever it is we are trying to do collectively and co-operatively becomes fragmented in one way or another. We break up into groups, factions, parties, tribes, states, nations, whatever. Then, within all of those, power struggles are inevitable. That's the way we are. Pride and selfishness makes us that way. That is also the way we have always been. Some think that is

The Second Great Commandment.

“To love one another as Jesus loves us.”

How do we do this?

1. By realizing its meaning in the living interpretation of the Spirit of Truth who
DIRECTS

the loving contact of one human being with another. (1951)

(Does the Spirit of Truth direct me?)

2. Our love, unselfishness, must undergo a constant and living re-adaptive interpretation of relationships in accordance with the leading of the Spirit of Truth. (1950)

(Does the Spirit of Truth lead me constantly?)

Why? So that, “all who behold your lives will recognize that you have been with me and thereby learned to do the will of the Father.” (1591)

the way we always will be. And there is no real evidence to the contrary, not even in the Urantia movement, its tribes, its sub-tribes, and its study groups.

Wouldn't it have been great if the Revelators had accepted the fact that we are what we are—evolutionary creatures—and given us a defragment program like our computers have. Then we would simply need to utter the magic word “DEFRAG” and lo and behold, we would all be happily together again. Well actually they did! Or at least, Jesus did! First he gave us a little lecture, as was his wont: “You do not have to see alike or feel alike or even think alike in order spiritually to *be alike*. Spiritual unity is derived from the consciousness that each of you is indwelt, and increasingly dominated, by the spirit gift of the heavenly Father.” (1591)

DEFRAG is the Thought Adjuster! And in the upgrade, DEFRAG2, the Spirit of Truth is added for free.

DEFRAG2 is in the public domain, available for the asking. It even has a utility to patch up personal relationships. All we have to do to institute the second great commandment, “to love one another as Jesus loved us” is to plug into the utility program, answer “Yes” to the question, “Do you really want to?” and then get your orders from the “Spirit of Truth who directs the loving contact of one human being with another.”

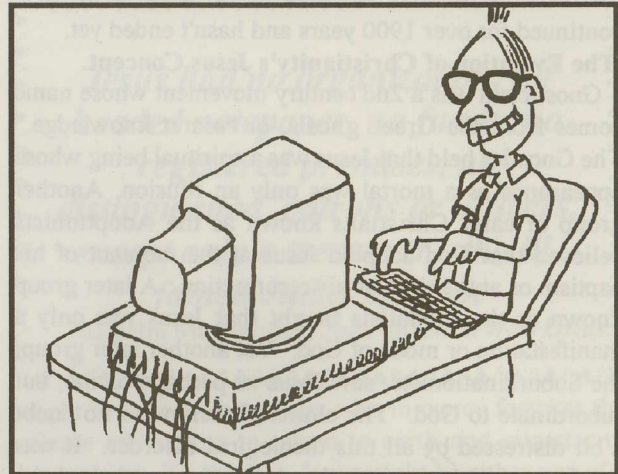
(1950)

If we are sincere about this, we can actually use the name "DEFRAG" to call up the program and get it operating. Whenever we have a personal relationships problem, stop for a moment, roll your eyes and look up to the heavens, soulfully mutter "DEFRAG" and after you get the bugs out of the system, you can guarantee the Spirit of Truth will take over and solve your problem.

Please note that it is your part of the problem that DEFRAG2 solves. If the second party is not using DEFRAG2 it cannot solve their part—but that is none of your business anyway. However it is amazing how often, if your part is solved, their part also gets solved. According to the book, this should be a cinch if both parties are using DEFRAG2. When this is so, all kinds of good things can happen. The book says: "Your personalities may be refreshingly diverse and markedly different, while your spiritual natures and the spirit fruits of divine worship and brotherly love may be so unified that all who behold your lives will of a surety take cognizance of this and have thereby learned, and acceptably, how to do the will of the Father in heaven." (1590). Now wouldn't that be something!

To get DEFRAG2 to operate in enhanced mode, it is helpful if individual users all have a common motive for life service, that they "desire above everything else to do the will of the Father in heaven." Another factor is having a common goal of existence, that they all "purpose to find the Father in heaven, thereby proving to the universe that they have become like him." (1951)

Another helpful way for defragmenting our personal relationships problems is by taking the course from which we can graduate from being *human creatures* and get our diplomas as *human beings*. Naturally a requirement of the course is to learn to *be*—how can we expect to be a *being* if we don't *be*? Jesus did a lot of coaching on this point to show us what we must *be*, not what we must *do*. We creatures have a habit of going about the *doing* of certain things as a means of attaining righteousness as an insurance policy for our salvation. But Jesus repeated again and again that, "in the



kingdom you must *be* righteous in order to *do* the work." (1584) He also told his followers: "Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." But that turned out to be a pretty tough assignment and no one had much success until he gifted us with the Spirit of Truth.

This is where we can again make use of DEFRAG2. Think hard on the name "DEFRAG", this calls up the icon which is a mental image of Jesus and then "love, unselfishness undergoes a constant and living re-adaptive interpretation of relationships in accordance with the leading of the Spirit of Truth." (1950) It is important to use the right icon because the Spirit of Truth never creates consciousness of himself only a consciousness of Jesus. (2061)

DEFRAG2 is described in detail in *The Urantia Book*, its use does not require a licence, and it is free. It is one of the most valuable utilities described in the book and could solve a lot of our crashes and glitches. On a scale of one to ten, it scores ten.

JESUS, MAN AND MYTH

Dick Bain, Hickory, NC. USA

Jesus once asked his Apostles this question: "Who do men say that I am?" The Apostles told him that he had been identified as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or even John the Baptist raised from the dead. Then Jesus confronted them with an even more startling question: "Who do you say I am?" The impetuous Simon Peter jumped up and said, "The deliverer, the Son of God!" Many of those who knew Jesus only by reputation assumed that he was the reincarnation of some well known prophet. Some of his enemies seemed to think that he was a person in league with the prince of devils. But the Apostles, who had lived with him for more than a year, believed he was the Son of God and in some way the Messiah expected by the Jews. That certainly didn't settle the matter; the search for Jesus' identity has

If anyone could prove to me that Christ is outside the truth, and if the truth really did exclude Christ, I would stay with Christ rather than with the truth.

Fyodor Dostoevsky, Letter to N. A. Fonvizina,
February 20th, 1854

continued for over 1900 years and hasn't ended yet.

The Evolution of Christianity's Jesus Concept.

Gnosticism was a 2nd century movement whose name comes from the Greek *gnosis*, or "secret knowledge." The Gnostics held that Jesus was a spiritual being whose appearance as a mortal was only an illusion. Another group of early Christians known as the Adoptionists believed that God adopted Jesus at the moment of his baptism or at the time of his resurrection. A later group known as the Modalists taught that Jesus was only a manifestation or mode of God. Yet another later group, the Subordinationists, saw Jesus as perhaps divine, but subordinate to God. The church fathers were no doubt a bit distressed by all this theological disorder. It was the Jesus concepts taught by Arius that motivated the church hierarchy to call the Council of Nicea. Arius taught that Jesus was God's first born creature, an agent who made all things. He taught that Christ was divine, less than God, but more than man. The matter was partly settled for the orthodox Christian church at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD. They adopted the ideas of Athanasius: "Christ begotten, not made. He is not creature, but creator, the same essence as the Father." The council was also forced to clarify the Trinity doctrine to show Jesus' relationship to the Father. But it was at the Council of Constantinople in 381 that the three persons of the Trinity were declared equal, which of course made Christ equal to the Father. The Council of Ephesus in 431 dealt with the relationship of the human and divine natures of Jesus, but didn't resolve the issue. It was finally resolved at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. Regarding Jesus' two natures they stated in part, "...in two natures without being mixed, transmuted, divided or separated....the identity of each nature is preserved and concurs into one person or being." This has ever since been the standard doctrine about the person of Christ for the Christian church. Attempts to enforce such standard doctrines yielded some ominous repercussions.

Since the church had gained considerable political power, expressing opinions that differed from the party line could prove hazardous to your health. Things didn't change a great deal until that upstart priest, Luther, told the Pope what he could do with his indulgences and touched off the Protestant reformation. When the church finally got out of the government business, thus losing the power to barbecue you for expressing contrary beliefs, and when science and the Rationalists began to look at the world, the church's dogmas began to lose authority. Critical scholarship began to ferret out inconsistencies and conflicts in the scriptures. Increasingly, starting at the end of the 18th century, scholars began the search for the historical Jesus. Some of them concluded that not only was it not possible to come up with a historical Jesus, but that he was only a mythological figure, a composite of people's Messianic



hopes.

Critical Scholarship and the Historical Jesus

Albert Schweitzer, in his 1906 book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, examined the work of some of the Jesus investigators who preceded him. The conclusion reached by many of these investigators was that the historical Jesus cannot be found in the scriptures. Schweitzer agrees with this conclusion, but he doesn't feel that this means that we cannot find Jesus at all. On the last page of his book he writes, "He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they pass through in His fellowship, and as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is." Schweitzer accepts the idea that Jesus existed, but feels that we cannot know Him just by studying the scriptures. Unlike Schweitzer, other investigators question Jesus' very existence.

In a book titled *Jesus Son of Man*, Rudolf Augstein goes to great lengths to totally discredit the scriptures. He sees Jesus as a mythological figure like Mithras. While he makes many excellent points about the inconsistencies and problems with the scriptures, he seems to go overboard in rejecting even the few non-scriptural references to Jesus. In its section about Jesus, *The Encyclopedia Britannica* lists three non-scriptural historical references that are represented as credible. First, Jesus' execution was mentioned in the annals of the Roman historian Tacitus about 110 A.D. The second reference comes from Josephus, the Jewish

historian at the court of Nomiian. Josephus mentions the stoning of "James, the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ." Josephus also mentions the death of John The Baptist. The third historical reference to Jesus is in the Talmud, a collection of Jewish writings. In here, Jesus is identified as the "possibly illegitimate son of a man named Panther. Jesus worked magic, ridiculed the wise, seduced and stirred up the people, gathered five disciples about him, was hanged (crucified) on the eve of passover." And recently archaeologists discovered the tomb of Caiaphas, the high priest who helped engineer the death of Jesus. But accepting Jesus' historical existence does nothing to explain who he was.

Jesus has been characterized as an uneducated peasant by some groups. In an article titled "Sepphoris" in the May/June issue of Biblical Archaeology Review, Richard Batey proposes that Jesus probably had been in the city of Sepphoris often, and may have even worked there as a carpenter since Sepphoris is only about an hour's walk from Nazareth. Batey says that archaeologists have determined that Sepphoris was a "Greco-Roman metropolis boasting upwards of 30,000 inhabitants..." and for three decades was the capitol of Galilee and Perea. In a footnote to this article Batey mentions that many scholars now accept that Jesus spoke Greek as well as Aramaic, and that some of the parables may have been composed originally in Greek. These ideas are in harmony with the account of Jesus' life in The Urantia Book. The evidence points to a Jesus who was multi-lingual and well educated for a man of his time, not an illiterate peasant. The ideas about Jesus seem as numerous and varied as pebbles on the beach.

A Jesus for Everyone

To the Christian fundamentalist, Jesus is God allowing himself to be crucified to save unworthy and sinful humanity from everlasting punishment. While most Christians of mainline Protestant churches would accept that Jesus is a divine being, they would be likely to see him as a bridge to God, rather than a sacrificial lamb. To the liberal Christian, Jesus may be only a great moralist and teacher. To the Moslem, Jesus is a prophet, an equal of Mohammed but not the Son of God. To the Hindu, Jesus may be an Avatar, a Hindu deity who incarnated on earth. To the Buddhist, Jesus

Jesus had no organization, no headed notepaper, no funds, no registered premises, no distinguished patrons or officers, except only a treasurer - the ill-famed Judas Iscariot

Malcolm Muggeridge, *Jesus the Man Who Loves*

might be a Bodhisattva, one who in mercy forsakes the release of Nirvana to return to earth and minister to humankind. To the Jew, Jesus might be either one of a group of false messiahs who worked the crowds around the time Jesus lived, or a good Jewish teacher who got in trouble with the authorities. To the agnostic, Jesus is a possibility; to the atheist, much ado about nothing. Rev. Bill Hammond, a Unitarian minister, in his sermon "Jesus, What Manner of Man?" sees Jesus as a man who started out as a magician but who later came to be seen as the Messiah by his followers. In a recent book, The Historical Jesus, John Dominic Crossman portrays Jesus as a teacher of peasant equalitarianism. He asserts that the Last Supper, Jesus' resurrection and Ascension weren't real events but "dramatic visualizations." So many books! So many Jesus's! As I read all this, I am reminded of an old saying: What Peter says about Paul tells more about Peter than it does about Paul. Likewise, perhaps what is written about Jesus tells more about the writer than about Jesus. Why is this so?

There are several things that make research of Jesus' life so difficult. First, except for one incident, the life of Jesus as depicted in the Bible is a blank from the time he is a few years old until he starts his public ministry at 30. There have been many speculations as to what he did during this time, but none are provable. Another problem is that unless you agree that the scriptures are infallible, you have a hard time separating what Jesus really said from the words that were put into Jesus' mouth by the writers and revisors of the scriptures. There is a group of scholars who have been trying for years to determine what Jesus really said. They feel that Jesus said less than a third of the words attributed to him. Their work uses the techniques of critical scholarship to winnow the words of Jesus from the added chaff. Unfortunately, the sayings of Jesus thought to be genuine form a very small part of the New Testament, hardly enough material with which to resurrect the historical Jesus. Another problem scholars have in putting together a picture of Jesus is that he did not reveal what he believed about himself except by his reactions to others. He simply called himself the Son of Man. He apparently accepted the title of Messiah rather

Christ is the universal man, the ideal of humanity; and it is right that He should be "crowned with many crowns," as each nation and each century invests Him with its own ideal attributes.

William Ralph Inge, *Wit and Wisdom of Dean Inge.*

reluctantly. It seems that he had a different notion of himself, but he couldn't overcome the preconceived Messianic expectations of his Jewish apostles. Scholars have therefore been free to put all sorts of notions into the mind of Jesus, some profound, some foolish, and all perhaps in error. So what are we to make of this Jesus if the experts can't agree?

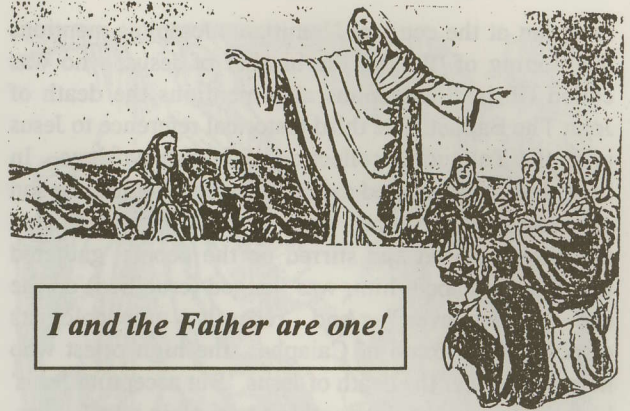
What Did Jesus Really Say?

While we can't always be certain what he did say, there are some things we can be sure he didn't say, ideas that are not among his words in the Bible. He never taught that humankind once lived in a state of innocence in some garden paradise until the Gods felt threatened and threw them out. He never taught that we inherited the sins of someone called Adam. He never taught that he was born of a virgin. He never taught that his mother, the Apostles or some priest could be an intercessor between us and God. He never taught that he was God. He did say, "I and the Father are one," but this can be interpreted in any number of ways. He never taught that his purpose in coming here was to die on a cross to satisfy the justice of a stern God-judge. While he didn't condemn the concept of a church, he didn't require that we should gather once a week in large ornate buildings to repeat words and sing songs written hundreds of years ago, and listen to someone give a half hour talk. It was Paul, not Jesus, who taught the doctrine of the depravity of man. Jesus condemned the sin, not the sinner. There is much in Christian theology and practice that Jesus never taught.

Despite the distortions and additions in the New Testament, perhaps enough of the spirit of Jesus leaks through to give us an idea of the nature of this profound person. Unfortunately, Christian theology has sometimes been more of a hindrance than a help in understanding Jesus. The Urantia Book and other sources characterize traditional Christianity more as a religion about Jesus rather than the religion of Jesus. I believe that Jesus came not to be revered, but to help us find God for ourselves by listening to his teachings and living our lives in the same spirit he lived his life.

Jesus and Women

From reading the Bible, but especially The Urantia Book, I perceive that Jesus was light years ahead of the people of his culture in his attitude towards women. There have been numerous speculations about Jesus and



I and the Father are one!

women such as: he might have been gay, maybe he had a wife that he kept hidden, or maybe he had an affair with Mary Magdalene. Or perhaps he was a priest in an obscure celibate Jewish cult. All idle speculation. The Catholic Church claims that Jesus and all of his Apostles were male; so therefore, priests should be male. On the other hand, The Urantia Book says that Jesus ordained a corps of women disciples to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of other women. After all, Jewish men could hardly do this sort of work; men and women were very restricted in their contacts with each other. This corps is mentioned in the New Testament, but only once. You aren't surprised at that, are you?

There is an incident mentioned in the Bible that sheds some light on Jesus' attitude toward women. As I understand it, a Jewish man wasn't supposed to talk to a woman in public, even his wife. Consider the incident of the woman at the well. We are told that she was there drawing water from Jacob's well in Samaria. Jesus was there without his apostles. He asked the woman for a drink of water. She mistook his friendliness for a pass at her, but Jesus quickly set her straight and led her into a spiritual discussion. Now consider the reaction of the Apostles. They came upon their Master not only talking to a woman, but a Samaritan woman at that. They must have been astounded! But then, perhaps the Apostles were frequently astounded at the things Jesus said and did.

We know that women played a significant part in the early church; perhaps this was due to the lingering influence of Jesus. But unfortunately, cultures evolve slowly. The male hierarchy eventually organized the church like their armies and governments thus excluding women. There is no doubt in my mind that if Christians had been true to the spirit of Jesus' life and teachings, women would have played a more prominent part in the later church. And there is another group who could profit if our culture had a less distorted picture of the human Jesus.

Jesus as Hero

It is sad that the heroes of many young people are rock stars and TV characters. It is unfortunate that the

If Jesus had been indicted by a modern court, he would have been examined by two doctors; found to be obsessed by a delusion; declared incapable of pleading; and sent to an asylum.

George Bernard Shaw, *Androcles and The Lion*, Preface.

majesty of the glorified and risen Christ has obscured the heroism of the human Jesus in Christian teachings, and that much of his life has been unknown to us. If young people could only hear the story of the young Jesus, bravely sustaining his family after the untimely death of his father, wouldn't they admire such courage, and wouldn't they be willing to follow such an admirable leader? The authors of the Jesus papers of *The Urantia Book* tell us, "If the Christian church would only dare to espouse the Master's program, thousands of apparently indifferent youths would rush forward to enlist in such a spiritual undertaking..." (2085) How excellent it will be when religious teachers someday use stories from *The Urantia Book* to inspire young people to live their lives in the spirit Jesus exemplified in his life.

Whatever we think about Jesus, most of us would agree that no individual has had a greater impact on the history of our planet than this spiritual teacher from Galilee. Through the means of the Christian church, his teachings have penetrated every corner of our planet. Where receptive minds and hearts are found, Jesus' ethical and moral teachings leaven the home life, the laws and institutions of government, and even the conduct of business. And as the expanded and clarified story of the life and teachings of Jesus in *The Urantia Book* slowly penetrate the world's cultures, we can anticipate still greater advances in all human endeavours. Even after 2000 years, his words still encourage us to spiritual growth and will do so throughout the ages to come. Jesus said, "...my words will never pass away." (Matthew 24:35, UB 1736)

Another and Greater John the Baptist!

In our second issue we asked for suggestions as to how "another and greater John the Baptist is going to arise proclaiming the kingdom of God is at hand without referring to the visible church or the second coming of Christ."

One such way could be by medium of the "personal development" courses being popularly attended. Over the past thirty years a number of psychological techniques aimed at enriching the individual's quality of life have been developed. Most have been either unsubstantiated by research, or have been incapable of being substantiated, and yet have gained popular acceptance. One of these techniques is called "Self-Parenting" and is well described in a little book called "Self-Parenting—12 Step Workbook." by Patricia O'Gorman and Philip Oliver-Diaz.

Although the effectiveness of certain of the techniques may be questionable, the philosophy behind the perspective is sound—based on recognition of both

our individual personality and our Higher Parent (approximately equivalent to the Thought Adjuster of *The Urantia Book*).

The authors hold that we have two inner voices of our true selves. One is that of our inner child, the other that of our Higher Parent—to us God. At birth these two voices are connected. Our inner self is the:

"centre of us, our personality, our loving and trusting nature. It is that part of us which is exquisitely alive, vital, creative, and from which we draw our energy. It is the part of us that feels our pain, anger and rage. Our inner self knows fear. Our inner self needs love, tenderness, and support and feels hopeless without them.

"Our higher Parent is the gentle centre of our inner wisdom and intuitive knowledge. Our higher Parent knows what is best for us. Our Higher Parent is objective and problem solving, the part of us that acts as our loving guide, should we so choose."

As children most of us were subjected to negative experiences and the conditional supplying of love, on a reward or withholding basis. In our attempt to survive we developed beliefs as to what life, ourselves and others were, often replacing our Higher Parent by self-will and self-reliance, i.e., we indulged ourselves in God-playing! We learnt that we can only depend upon ourselves for survival and carry this belief into adulthood, feeling that we can depend on no one and nothing else but ourselves. With some people this process can lock them into a childlike belief in God as a "bad parent who has abandoned us in our time of need."

"It is only by restoring and maintaining the connection between our 'inner child' and our Higher Parent that we can free ourselves to be the complete individual we were born to be." Hence it is a spiritual pathway whereby we recover from fear of abandonment, rejection, misguided sense of loyalty to our family and/or their beliefs, bitterness, self-reliance, desire to control our environment or whatever belief or strategy we use to survive. *"Without the help of a power greater than ourselves, we rarely find the strength to take the steps necessary to change our lives."* The process of believing that recovery is possible through faith opens the door to limitless growth and self-actualization, and as long as we have faith in our Higher Parent we are never really alone. Also included in this recovery process is the



conscious—then to present this same man to God as his faith son."

The book then tells us that both of these essential revelations are accomplished in Jesus. He became, indeed, "the way, the truth, and the life." His religion was wholly based on the living of his bestowal life on earth. It goes on to say that he left behind no books, laws, or other forms of human organization affecting the religious life of the individual.

That appears to be the entrails of Plan A. No book was involved. His followers had one job only - to teach the individual that God is their Father and to lead them to become conscious of their sonship. Jesus knew there was only one way to convince a Urantia mortal about the truth of Plan A. That is "do-it-yourself." So he became "the way, the truth, and the life," his very own life became the living example of a son of God in mortal mode.

Possibly Jesus thought about writing a book and distributing it to anyone with the purchase price. If so, that must have been the Plan B that was inaugurated about 1900 years later, possibly because Plan A was not going so well. However Plan B contains no indication that Plan A was to be supplanted as the first essential, the first priority. In fact, Jesus was so sure about Plan A that Peter, James, and John thought he "was beside himself." (1594)

Next, the book tells us that Plan A was "to establish and demonstrate a standard of human life for all peoples" everywhere, for ever and ever, amen. Jesus was a teacher, not a preacher. He taught by example, he had a singleness of purpose, he was not bothered by the evil of the world. His example included that he paid no attention to public opinion, he was uninfluenced by praise, he seldom paused to correct misunderstandings or to resent misrepresentations. He never asked for advice, never made requests for prayers, sometimes was

Innerface International

Our Mandate

Your mission to the world is founded on the fact that I lived a God-revealing life among you; on the truth that you and all other men are the sons of God; and it shall consist in the life which you will live among men—the actual and living experience of loving men and serving them, even as I have loved and served you. Let faith reveal your light to the world; let the revelation of truth open the eyes blinded by tradition; let your loving service effectually destroy the prejudice engendered by ignorance. By so drawing close to your fellow men in understanding sympathy and with unselfish devotion, you will lead them into a saving knowledge of the Father's love. (2043)

saddened but never discouraged, and he never apologized to any man. Of course he could get away with that because he had nothing for which to apologize. He was easy of approach, independent of other humans, never dominated by purely mortal influence, or subject to frail human judgment. And he was always selfless. All this he could achieve because he had constant communion with his Thought Adjuster and he submitted to the will of his Father, regardless. That also was a major component of Plan A.

When he left us, he gave those who decide to follow after him an additional aid. He did this because we Urantians are handicapped by a congenital disease—lack of the necessary spiritual capacity that would enable us to maintain constant communication with the Father-spirit within. So Jesus endowed us with the Spirit of Truth that can make us conscious of the presence of himself. In this way he can compensate for our deficiencies. The proof? "In less than a month after the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth, the apostles made more individual spiritual progress than during their almost four years of personal and loving association with the Master." (2061)

I think all of us would be incompetent to implement Plan A without giving ourselves over to the leading of the Spirit of Truth. Since our only business is to reveal God to the individual as their Father, this has to be an inter-personal relationship. We Urantians are particularly competent at messing up on interpersonal

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

The format for the journal is:

Articles:

- a) on issues that enhance individual spiritual (not psychic) growth.
- b) that are relevant to *The Urantia Book*.
- c) that assist in the understanding of other religions.

Selection criteria for contributions:

Generally articles should not exceed about 2000 words. There should be no derogatory personal comments. The primary guiding principle of editorial philosophy is: "What would Jesus do."

NETWORKS

POEGWAM, which stands for **Peace on Earth and Goodwill Among Men**, is the name of a recording group associated with the Garrick family who have put out tapes of their Urantia Book-inspired gospel music. For their most recent tape, write to POEGWAM Records and Publications, 249 Coldwater Rd., Orilla, Ont. Canada. L3V3M1

relationships. This is why we must rely on the Spirit of Truth.

A part of Plan A is revealing the Father by the example of our own lives. This requires that "we so relate ourselves to our fellows that they will receive the highest possible good as a result of our contact with them." If we think we can do that on our own, we may have an ego problem requiring professional treatment. Our revelation recognizes our incompetence for the task, and provides us with a way: "And so must we clearly recognize that neither the golden rule nor the teaching of non-resistance can ever be properly understood as dogmas or precepts. They can only be comprehended by living them, by realizing their meanings in the living interpretation of the Spirit of Truth, who directs the loving contact of one human being with another." (1950) Jesus will direct us if we will let him. If we do not at least try to do this, we might as well give our books to someone who will.

Spreading the message of the book by spreading the book itself belongs to Plan B. If Plan B was going to work, would it not have achieved ten thousand fold more than it has over the last forty years? Maybe ten thousand times ten thousand. If Jesus did not think Plan A was better, why did he knock back a Plan B kind of approach? The book confirms that he did so: "Let me emphatically state this eternal truth: If you, by truth co-ordination, learn to exemplify in your lives this beautiful wholeness of righteousness, your fellow men will then seek after you that they may gain what you have so acquired. The measure wherewith truth seekers are drawn to you represents the measure of your truth endowment, your righteousness. The extent to which you have to go with your message to the people is, in a way, the measure of your failure to live the whole or righteous life, the truth-co-ordinated life." (1726)

A corollary to this statement is that if we implement Plan A, Plan B (the book) will sell itself. It's surely worth a try.

Again I tell you: As the Father sent me into the world, so send I you. As I have revealed the Father, so shall you reveal the divine love, not merely with words, but in your daily living. I send you forth, not to love the souls of men, but rather to love men. You are not merely to proclaim the joys of heaven but also to exhibit in your daily experience these spirit realities of the divine life since you already have eternal life, as the gift of God, through faith. (2043)

Jesus said: "If my children are one as we are one, and if they love one another as I have loved them, all men will then believe that I came forth from You and be willing to receive the revelation of truth and glory which I have made." (1964)

Science and The Urantia Book

Origins of Andon and Fonta

Conventional wisdom on the origin of the human species is that, 4 million years ago in Africa, a little creature just over a meter tall emerged from the evolutionary melting pot, and stood up.

The first such creature to be discovered received the name "Lucy"—later changed to Australopithecus afarensis. Lucy had knee joints that allowed her to straighten her legs. Also she made footprints that confirmed that she stood up. Dating of fossils beyond 200,000yrs old is not easy. It is generally done indirectly by dating the ground where they are found—for Lucy at about 4 million years B.P. (before the present).

Lucy had a skull more ape-like than human and was probably no smarter than the average ape. Fossil remains of two other primate-like species found in Africa, Paranthropus boisei and Paranthropus robustus are thought to have been evolutionary dead ends. Supposedly Lucy and her buddies gave rise to the next step, named Homo habilis (handy man). H. habilis was a tool maker, may have appeared about 2.5 million years B.P., looked something like Lucy, but had a larger brain. He/she was about 1.5 meters tall, under 45 kg, probably a scavenger, and supposedly gave rise to the next evolutionary jump called Homo erectus. This guy was more advanced so is measured in feet and inches -5ft 6in. to be precise. He was almost indistinguishable from modern man except for a flattened forehead, prominent brow ridges and no chin (remind you of anyone?). Conventional wisdom has him originating in Africa around 2 million B.P. He was supposed to have taken a long time to get out of Africa and to migrate to Java (1 million B.P) and Peking. When Java man was re-dated to 2 million B.P. in 1970, the work was at first ignored. New dating puts two Java fossils at 1.8 and 1.7 million B.P., is probably reliable, but was unwelcome as it did not fit conventional wisdom.

The oldest "human" fossils from Africa and the Middle East were put at 120,000 B.P. until new, also unwelcome reports from China came up with a 200,000 year old human skull. Neanderthal man is still in trouble. Dated from 200,000 - 20,000yrs B.P. he/she is thought to be either unrelated to modern man, or to have evolved independently into Europeans, or at least be

ancestral to some Europeans. Take your pick.

How does this tie in with the announcement about the recent African genesis of humans from a single "mitochondrial Eve" 200,000 yrs ago? (Wilson and Cann, Scientific American, April 1992). And how does that tie in to Andon and Fonta (about 1,000,000 B.P.) or Adam and Eve (37,898 B.P.)?

There are more ways than one of breaking eggs - but they may not all produce the same result. Mitochondrial Eve is based on the concept that the DNA of little energy-producing organelles in living cells derives only from the egg. The male part of the fertilization package contributes about half of the chromosomal DNA but none of the mitochondrial DNA. If we can measure the average rate of mutation of mitochondrial DNA and get some line on diversity, then maybe we can extrapolate backwards to when all mitochondrial DNA was one - or something like that. Wilson and Cann came up with Mother Eve having spawned the human species 200,000 yrs B.P.

Another way of breaking eggs looked at a different class of DNA, and combined this with the coalescence theory of population genetics to come up with the conclusion that all human alleles (variations of the same gene) date back no further than 400,000 yrs—which is twice as old as Mitochondrial Eve.

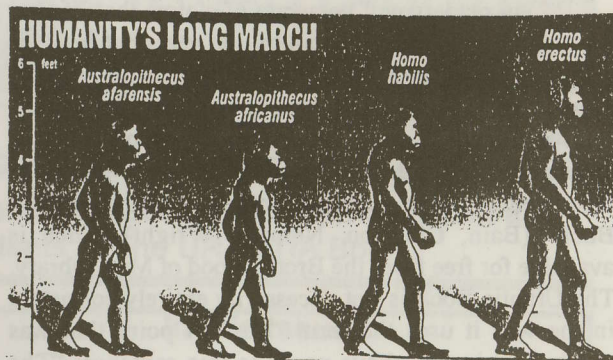
There are problems with both these methods. Taking the last one first, the idea is to select "neutral" genes randomly and do much the same thing as the Mitochondrial Eve job to date back to the ancestral gene. The problem is whether the genes are truly neutral. To be so there must be no selective advantage in comparison with other genes. The work that gave the 400,000 yr. answer was shot down in flames as being a vast underestimate. Now here's the bit that takes a swipe at Eve:

"In fact, the study demonstrated no such thing. What the authors did claim to establish - although contested by several investigators—is that all mitochondrial DNA variants are derived from an ancestral molecule borne by a female who lived some 200,000 years ago. This conclusion, even if true, would not mean that the human pedigree began with a single mother but only that the extant mitochondrial DNA alleles coalesce to a single ancestral molecule extant 200,000 years ago."

What this says is that even if the data are correct it only means that there could have been a large

*To observe and explore the world is
the task of science;
to judge it and determine our
attitudes toward it is the the task of
religion*

Leo Baeck, *The essence of Judaism*



population of Eve's at that time, all with the same brand of mitochondrial DNA.

Of more interest to Urantia Book readers are the other scraps that have come from these studies. Most of the work has been on the "MHC" genes of the human immune system concerned with "self-recognition." These ensure that if you get a skin graft from your neighbor, it will drop off. But if you get it from your identical twin, it might stick. Besides telling us that we derive these genes from a cross species ancestry going back at least 65,000,000 years, it also permits an estimate of the size of breeding populations that give rise to a species, including the human species. Quote: "The MHC data imply that the early hominid line split, at some stage, into at least two populations—one of which led to modern Homo sapiens (us). This population consisted of at least 500 but more likely 10,000 breeding individuals who carried most of the MHC alleles and allelic lineages now found in human populations."

Many (most?) readers think that the Urantia Book claims that Andon and Fonta were the sole ancestral parents of all of us. In fact, it does not. It says: "Even the loss of Andon and Fonta before they had offspring, though delaying human evolution, would not have prevented it. Subsequent to the appearance of Andon and Fonta, and before the mutating potentials of animal life were exhausted, there evolved no less than seven thousand favorable strains which could have achieved some sort of human type of development. And many of these better stocks were subsequently assimilated by the various branches of the expanding human species." (734). Which would account quite nicely for the present polymorphism of the MHC alleles, as well as the estimates of the initial size of the breeding population at between 500 and 10,000. Ain't that marvellous?

Reference: Klein, J., N. Takahata, & F.J. Ayala. "MHC Polymorphisms and Human Origins." Scientific American 269 (6) 46-51. 1993.

When did "life" start on Urantia?

Many readers will be aware of claims that life has been on Urantia for close to 4 billion years but that *The Urantia Book* states the original life patterns were planted here 550,000,000 years ago by the Life Carriers. This discrepancy may be due to differences in the definition of what constitutes "life" and has been discussed in "The Science Content of The Urantia Book" (Bain, Glasziou, Neibaur, Wright) which is available for free from the Brotherhood of Man Library. The Urantia Book is not necessarily entirely consistent in the way it uses the term "life." A point that was overlooked in the above paper is this sentence: "The material self, the ego-entity of human identity, is dependent during the physical life on the continuing function of the material life vehicle, on the continued existence of the unbalanced equilibrium of energies and intellect which, on Urantia, has been given the name, life." (1229)

The word to notice is "intellect." One of the requirements to include "original life plasm" on your family tree is the potential to display "intellect" So

maybe there has been a lot of organic systems on Urantia, loosely classified as living, but lacking "intellect" for which the "original life plasm" concocted by the Life Carriers is not ancestral. Some of these systems may have been present 3-4 billion years ago, but do not qualify as "life" as the term is used in the book.

The book says, "The original life plasm of the evolutionary world must contain the full potential for all future developmental variations and for all subsequent evolutionary changes and modifications." (398) The Bain et al. paper briefly discusses work on "homeotic" genes suggesting that combinations of genes (homeoboxes) controlling development of functional organs in insects and mammals (a limb, for example) were already present in ancestral form in lowly organisms such as the roundworm (see also McGinnis et al., Sc. Amer. Feb. 1994). This accords with the Urantia Book statement that the full genetic potential to give rise to us was present in the original life plasm. Darwin and his followers would not have conceded that possibility.

Sayings of the Sages

"Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire."

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

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