

Further Book of Note

Late Night Thoughts about Science by Peter A. Sturrock. Exoscience Publishing, 2015. xiii + 172 pp. \$16.99 (paperback). ISBN: 978-0984261468.

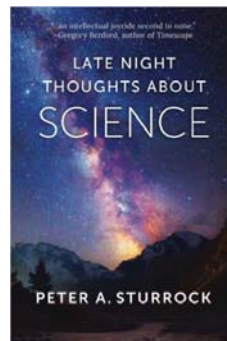
Few high-achieving scientists have also given as much thoughtful attention as Peter Sturrock has to things that science doesn't know. In this book, Sturrock describes fifteen "questions to which I do not have answers, to which I would like to have answers."

Those are: ball lightning; the Allais effect (pendulums and eclipses); low-energy nuclear reactions ("cold fusion"); intriguing properties of beta decays (one of the mechanisms of radioactivity); precognition; clairvoyance; remote viewing; psychokinesis; anomalous healing; out-of-body experiences; reincarnation; permanently unidentified flying objects; crop circles; Tunguska; Shakespeare authorship.

The rigorous empiricism and intellectual clear-headedness Sturrock brings to bear is illustrated by some of these, for instance *permanently* unidentified flying objects, which immediately forestalls the typical "Skeptic's" enumeration of all the UFO reports that turned out to be planets, satellites, etc. The problem for the pseudo-skeptics is that the weirdest sighting reports seem to be also the best-documented from the most reliable sources.

Again, empirical and evidence-based are distinctions that most people would probably not make, among the topics often grouped together as "psi." But Sturrock is determined not to pre-judge, so he recognizes that the evidence for precognition is not at the same time evidence for clairvoyance, and that neither is inherently or necessarily related to out-of-body experiences or reincarnation; nor are the latter two necessarily related to one another, no matter how likely such a relationship might seem.

Questions about the authorship of "Shakespeare's" plays are not usually included in compendia of mysteries or anomalies, but this topic is a natural one here because the general approach Sturrock takes and proselytizes for, the Bayesian approach and consideration of multiple hypotheses, can



serve wherever one seeks to be as strictly evidence-based and bias-free as possible.

This is a marvelously instructive as well as interesting book. While you're at it, in case you missed them, don't fail to read Sturrock's *A Tale of Two Sciences: Memoirs of a Dissident Scientist* (2009) and *AKA Shakespeare: A Scientific Approach to the Authorship Question* (2013).

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