

BOOK REVIEW

A Trojan Feast: The Food and Drink Offerings of Aliens, Faeries, and Sasquatch by Joshua Cutchin. Anomalist Books, 2015. 270 pp. ISBN 978-1938398353.

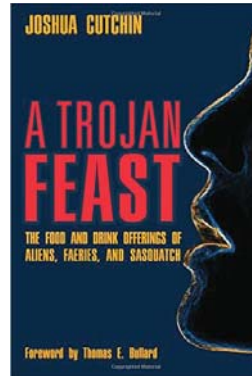
The bottom line is that if you find yourself abducted, invited, or otherwise in the company of sentient nonhuman entities, don't ingest any of their items of sustenance that they might offer. Cutchin reveals many tales of people who have reported such encounters and provides details about the different characteristics of the provisions. Chapters delineate breads, liquids, fruits, pills, and on rare occasions meats that are offered for a variety of reasons that range from drugging the victim, preventing them from leaving the altered realm and returning to their real world, to providing cures for current illnesses. Prohibitions aside, those presented with things to eat or drink often are not provided the option of whether or not to partake.

All of the book's research is based on an extensive literature search. Heavily annotated, the book with 186 pages containing script has 417 specific references and an additional 24 pages of bibliography. From a critical perspective it is the farrago of source material that is problematic. The veracity of citations varies widely. There are established credible sources such as Jacques Vallee, Thomas Bullard, Dennis McKenna, and others with known qualities of research. Then there are sources listed with unknown authors and taken from newsletters, tabloids, and the Internet with highly questionable provenance. Global in nature, the reports fluctuate from firsthand accounts of encounters with strange beings to reiteration of popular folklore.

Cutchin does have a point in accepting this wide range of citations. That is the comparison of common factors that permeate the stories and transcend diverse cultures. An interesting chapter explores the possible relationship between the offerings of entities and the Sattvic diet. The concept, he notes, sometimes coincides with ayurvedic philosophy that certain foods have innate characteristics that impact, or are displayed in, human behaviors. The Sattvic group, including sweet fruits, dairy products, honey, most nuts and grains, are believed to be the purest and "associated with balance and order." While these foods are not provided exclusively, they are found in a large number of the reports.

Another segment of his analysis addresses dimethyltryptamine (DMT),

sometimes referred to in popular literature as “The Spirit Molecule.” Here Cutchin relies heavily on the works of ethno-anthropologists and medical researchers such as Rick Strassman who have studied the effects of ayahuasca in both laboratory and natural settings. The description pertaining to legalities is only partially correct. While U.S. laws are not specified in the text, it is correct to note that DMT is generally illegal for recreational use in North America. However, that is not true in the Southern Hemisphere. In fact, in Peru, not only is ayahuasca legal, it is officially considered part of the national heritage. Shamans from Ecuador, Colombia, and Brazil all legally incorporate ayahuasca in their ceremonies, and it is an integral part of the rapidly growing religion of Santo Daime. It is suggested that some of the abduction experiences with ingestion have a DMT component that may be responsible, at least in part, for the descriptions of unusual experiences.



Later Cutchin provides his own theoretical basis for these strange experiences. On page 184 he specifically states, “my hypothesis [is] these beings—as well as any craft they are piloting, clothes they are wearing, or food they are offering—are made manifest via DMT.” That is a very big leap in logic as it could only apply to incidents in which victims/subjects have ingested some material or had it somehow implanted. The obvious problem comes from the multitude of cases in which no such interaction took place. In addition, there are cases in which physical evidence is acquired thus proving the incident was not a mental aberration or altered state of consciousness. What is attractive is the notion that these unusual encounters are presented in a manner that best fits the ability of the recipient to comprehend at least a modicum of what they are experiencing.

In fairness, Cutchin does admit there are “flaws in my hypothesis” and acknowledges that paradoxes abound. He does consider the problem that in studying phenomena, the pieces never quite fit together. It is the outliers, he notes, that are “both a blessing and a curse.” Thus it is endemic that most hypotheses about them are incomplete at best. Any effort to combine such diverse anomalies as faeries, extraterrestrial aliens, and Sasquatch into a single study is fraught with problems. Most researchers who have examined any one of the topics are soon faced with massive complexities. Cutchin has taken a different approach by examining one of the parameters that crosscuts all of the phenomena, and has basis in all living things as well. It is an interesting attempt and at least provides guideposts for others who want to explore the wealth of literature he has uncovered. —**JOHN B. ALEXANDER**