

the book

Uncommon Sense reaches the parts of your brain the State would prefer undisturbed. Most seem to think that we must get big government to sort out our big problems. This book argues that coercive government itself is inescapably our biggest problem - and that freedom is our greatest hope. You needn't be confused by the apparent madness any more nor regard it as a necessary evil or the only option.

The study of "chaos theory" shows why the coercive efforts of the state so seldom achieve their initial intentions. It shows how our evolving society has naturally brought about such a great, though endangered civilization. It is within the nature of the free universe to create order and harmony in complex systems - such as society. Uncommon Sense is not a learned treatise nor a New Age ramble. It is a positive and sensible book that most readers find thought-provoking, funny and optimistic - whilst being one of the most peacefully subversive books they have ever read.

who did it

Author Gregory Sams pioneered the introduction of natural foods to the UK - opening SEED macrobiotic restaurant in 1967 at the age of 18, Ceres grain store in the Portobello Road two years later and Harmony Food (now Whole Earth Foods) soon after, as well as being closely involved with Harmony Magazine and Seed, the Journal of Organic Living. He conceived, named and launched the original VegeBurger™ in 1982, built it up for six years, then moved out of food and into fractals, founding Strange Attractions - the world's only shop dedicated to chaos theory (London 1990). Since then he has gone on to produce and license fractal images worldwide on everything from posters to clothing fabrics (Space Tribe). He has had rich experience of the counter-culture becoming mainstream and is well placed to present this refreshingly acerbic, humorous, and optimistic study of the current state we are in.

response

"Thank you for putting it into words."
countless readers

"Lots of good sense - seen nothing I disagree with!"
Arthur C. Clarke - sci-fi visionary

"I thought that I was crazy until I read your book"
Martin, Brighton artist

"It is a good easy read, with someone thinking behind it.
Your theme - the balance between chaos and order - is the Big One, certainly for politics and how we live.
You put your finger on the situation, clarify it...
make readers see how things are changing
and how much there is to hope for."
John Michell - author and early writer on ley lines

"It's like a breath of fresh air - this is a very
important book"
Stu, editor of Dream Creation

Good call, good humour, good intention, good read -
if you enjoy books and thinking, then this is the goods.
Rocklands - online zine - <http://welcome.to/rocklands>

"Not a nutty fringe-weirdo manifesto, the book is amusing,
well written and definitely a good present to give to your
mother-in-law or anyone who you don't mind provoking.
Very Very Recommended Reading!
Remy Blanc - amazon.com reviewer

access the book

See the whole book FREE ONLINE at

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PLUS Greg's stunning fractal gallery, the story of the VegeBurger, and of Strange Attractions, world's only ever chaos shop. And hot links.

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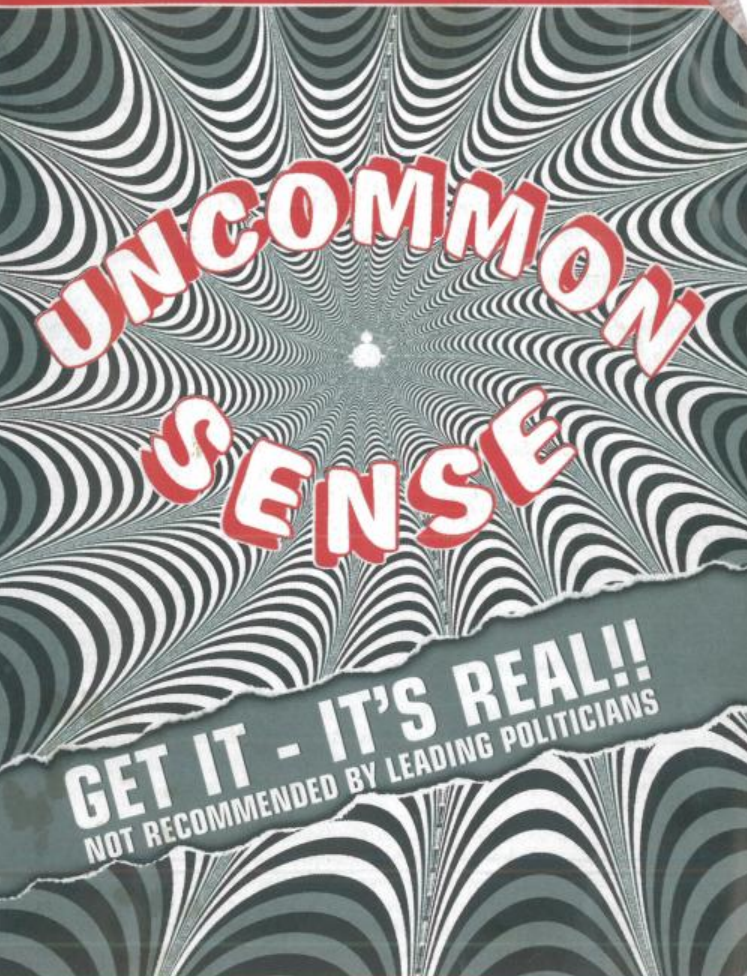
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Author: Gregory Sams

ON SALE FROM ME



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NOT RECOMMENDED BY LEADING POLITICIANS

The State is Out of Date

Ch27. a New Church

Every weekend in Great Britain, half a million or more people gather in places of worship and joyfully celebrate their humanity and love for one another. Some of them came to know each other socially or in business and more have met through attendance at the church. Many of them take the sacrament and many just partake of the holiness of the time and place as a "holiday" from the stresses of the harder and sometimes joyless world of work and material matters.

The church I am speaking about has no central organisation and no published doctrine. There is no one to worship in this church but God in whatever form the churchgoers perceive the universal concept. This new church takes many forms, and gatherings can be located in empty warehouses, purpose-built venues, open fields, on the beach or wherever circumstances lead. Geographically, it is not even certain whether this free-form religion began in England, the Balearic Islands or the Indian subcontinent. This will be for historians to determine. What is certain is that it has spread rapidly throughout Europe, Australia, N.Z., Japan, parts of South America, and now begins to blossom in that last bastion of change, the U.S.A.

The church goes by many names and here I will simply call it the New Party. I do this because the new devotees often refer to "going to a party" when they are planning their worship, though nothing in the history of partying has ever been the same. The celebration is of life, love and harmonies. One of the tangible aspects of this church's atmosphere is described by the term "safe" - the "cool" of the Nineties. The New Parties are not meat markets though an abundance of meeting takes place. Indeed, through these parties, today's generation is re-inventing the community, a valuable social tool that has become an increasingly endangered tradition over the last few decades. Many of us today are more up-to-date with the surrogate lives of our favourite TV soap opera characters than with the real-life events that move and shake our neighbours and our workmates.

The community, a low budget and sustainable alternative to the "jet-set" of the 50's, is constantly on the move, travelling to well-established sites such as Ibiza, Byron Bay, Goa, and total eclipses - regularly moving between European cities for annual parties and special events in Berlin, Hamburg, Prague, London, Wales, Normandy, Sarajevo, or an oak forest in Portugal. Today party-goers and DJ's move fluidly around the globe, secure in the knowledge that they have a community in many parts of the world which will know, understand and welcome them.

Central to the new church is the new music, techno - as much a departure from all that came before it as were the Beatles and Pink Floyd to Frank Sinatra and Glen Miller. This new music is as difficult to digest and understand for many of the Rock n' Roll generation as rock music was to their parents, but it is essential to the ritual of the dance and the nature of the party that it supports. It is pure music that works with rhythms and beats, made by musicians who work with computers as well as instruments, sampled sounds and dedicated new technology. Some of this dedicated equipment is as essential to the new music as was the invention of the piano machine to Bach and Beethoven. Nearly a century of English-language dominance of the worldwide popular music industry threatens now to be overturned, as music begins, once again, to be held more important than the lyric or the performer's personality. It is music to take your mind where you like, with an absence of complex lyrics or story lines. It is music to dance through the night with.

In the last ten years, the family tree of techno has spawned an awesome array of musical styles continually re-tuning to millions of different ears as those ears are being moved by the music's evolution. Different branches of this tree produce different styles of party. Most parties will incorporate a chill-out area, where slower and softer ambient music is played while the celebrants relax between dances, catch up with friends, or chill for most of the whole night. Though many parties are at regular venues, the cream of them will usually be produced by party-teams who seek to deliver the "best party ever" to most of those present, creating the finest mix of music, ambiance and sound quality ever experienced. And they are successful surprisingly often. The positive collaboration and positive competition to inspire the cosmic punters make for some great parties, and they are probably the safest form of "youth entertainment" this century. You are more likely to suffer injury or death down at the pub, disco, out sailing, whilst riding to hounds, or going for a swim.

The closest thing to the preacher of the old-style fixed beliefs church, or the rock star of the old music industry, is today's DJ, who draws people to a party because of his or her skill at getting the music right - being the vibrant pulse of the party, moving with it and being moved by it. Yet few of those who follow a DJ to a party would recognize them on the bus, or wish to have posters of them, or autographs. The same is true of the musicians and the bands they form - they are known and loved for their music and not their personalities and PR hype. Techno maestros don't do chat shows.

As with some religions, there is a sacrament often taken at these parties, in the form of specific drugs - substances the same as or very like those taken at some of the earliest religious ceremonies recorded from different faiths. Some will take psilocybin mushrooms, reputed by Terence McKenna to be the original "flesh of Christ" in the Christian sacrament. Others will partake of LSD, MDMA (Ecstasy), cannabis, other drugs, and sometimes a tin or two of beer. Many celebrants will take no drugs at all and just partake of the spirit that is tangibly present. Cocaine use is infrequent, and amphetamine use would reduce were reputable Ecstasy and other preferred substances more readily available.

Dance is the ritual - a celebratory and traditional form of worship that releases tensions of the week and promotes physical healing. The positive effects of the dance probably more than offset any toxic elements that might be present in some of the drugs taken. The dance, too, is new and does not depend upon a partner. You may be part of a posse, or with your partner, but it need not be evident to anyone else. If the participants lay claim to any religion in particular, it is probably that of paganism for they are likely to see God in every aspect of creation, from the babbling brook to the tree, mountain, or swallow flying overhead - and particularly in their fellow human beings.

It is a church of personal enlightenment and revelations that are shared and compared rather than delivered from a pulpit by some demagogue who is more than likely recounting the handed-down and sanitised account of someone else's revelation from a distant past in a very different society. It might be true that in the return from the enlightenment experience the drug user "brings back" less of the revelation than does the monk who spent twenty years on the path, but much of great value is brought back and filtered and refined through the process of discussion and reflection. And it is first-hand experience, not just recounted wisdom, however deep. To enlighten according to Collins Dictionary, is to "give information or understanding" and "to free from prejudice, superstition, etc." We can use some of that.

"We can be knowledgeable with other men's knowledge but we cannot be wise with other men's wisdom."

Montaigne (1533 - 1592)

The members of this community serve each other, making and selling to each other clothes, music, jewellery, food, drugs, artwork, and many items of the culture at festivals, shops, or across cafe tables around the world. Much of this economy tends to provide a lower than average level of financial support to the countless faces of the state needing feeding - the Dept. of This or That, the Bureaucracy of Brussels, parliaments, the military-industrial complex, foreign "aid," prison construction, etc. and seems well able to look after itself without this added burden. This largely small-scale and free-floating new enterprise structure could be seen as a sort of New Age business community, where good karma and a sound reputation count for a lot. And it should be encouraged, not through any state subsidy, but through lack of attack by the tax-greedy authorities and the chieftains of the War on Drugs. What is perhaps feared most is that the new community questions some of the basic principles that the authorities would legislate as the foundation of our culture - the altar stones of material greed, taxes, conflict, and respect for authority.

At a more instinctive level, the custodians of order know that dramatic revelations on a personal level, whether acquired through years of meditation and study, or through an interface with the cosmic intelligence of the universe, have one inevitable result if allowed to flourish - they change our society and culture. The would-be controllers see their job as

keeping things stable, by which they mean keeping them the way they are now, or rather the way they would like it to be now, or maybe the way they imagine things used to be some time in the past, when society seemed to work better. They don't really know what they want, but new ideas and trends certainly set their alarm bells ringing, because they only know how to control what they know. This is why the established order of the day persecuted the early Christians; why, in 1600, Giordano Bruno was burnt to death by Christians for maintaining that the Earth was not the centre of the Universe; and why, in 1966, America's FBI burned the books of a Japanese teacher who suggested that the American diet did not promote good health (Georges Ohsawa on macrobiotics).

It would seem appropriate that, at a time when the planet itself is threatened, a community should develop that is able to glimpse and thereby respect the glory of the universal spirit in everything it infuses, rather than just in the image and likeness of our own arrogant selves.

The new church, party, call it what you like, is evolution happening - meeting the needs of our society and filling some of the gaps that the old generation traditionally complain about. It has happened quietly enough on the fringes of society and without the benefit of PR companies or listings in events guides. The church has managed to grow large with a low profile. It is a church that takes great joy in the wondrousness of being - of life itself. In the Middle Ages, its participants would have been burnt as witches or persecuted out of existence. Though still subject to harassment and jailing today, the church has now become too big to suppress or contain in the future. May the chaos be with it. -END-



It's Tam at a local Church benefit in Goa

Disclaimer: This chapter is included for sociological interest only and readers are advised to avoid any spiritual activity not supervised by ordained priests and sanctioned by the government. Then you will be sure to go to heaven - when you die.

For all this and more: www.chaos-works.com