

Appearances: Genetic Mythology and Cosmic Instincts

Laurie McRobert

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Laurie McRobert has written an intriguing book outlining her theory that the phenomenon she collectively refers to as “appearances”—visions of ghosts, angels, UFOs, or other entities that have manifested themselves throughout world culture and history—are evidence of a cosmic consciousness. McRobert theorizes that this cosmic consciousness is holographically transmitting symbolic messages to genetically-susceptible humans, urging mankind to develop the technologies needed for exploration of the universe as an evolutionary imperative.

McRobert is adept at deconstructing complicated and technical subject matter from many scientific and philosophical disciplines. The reader will be introduced to Jungian psychology, quantum physics, virtual reality and holograph technology, epigenetics, supercomputer logic systems, and what is presently understood about the mechanics of human vision, among other concepts. It is McRobert's clarity of language and breadth of knowledge across many disciplines that are most impressive about her writing. Whether or not the reader agrees with the author's conclusions, the gradual fleshing out of her theories is illuminating and studded with analysis of the work of great minds as diverse as Immanuel Kant, Francis Crick, and Emmanuel Swedenborg. Extensive endnotes also provide more information about tangential research and discussion.

The author's style is persuasive, and she uses phrases such as “we find” and “our argument,” a technique that subtly includes the audience in the statement of her theories. In doing so, McRobert perhaps nudges the reader toward agreement with her conclusions with word choice rather than with the meat of the argument. As befits a book written by a philosopher, there is frequent use of the question mark, a device which helps the reader pause to consider dense and complicated ideas. To assert that this book is thought provoking is an understatement.

A few typos and a reference to India as belonging to the Middle East are minor flaws in an otherwise polished volume. It is unfortunate, then, that the cover art of a white goddess bobbing around a galaxy gives the impression that this book should be shelved with New Age material. It is also a surprising choice, given McRobert's disdain for what she terms a “pseudo-religious movement” whose authors use select tidbits of scientific data in their “imaginatively conjured-up stories.” A more abstract or geometrical design might serve to attract a more serious-minded audience.

Appearances is a comprehensive and thoughtful exposition of the author's attempt to explain why so many people throughout the world and in different eras have had similar visions. McRobert's creative mind not only thinks outside the box, but also builds the box, atom by atom. This fascinating book raises numerous questions to ponder and explore further, and would be a great addition to the popular science or philosophy section of a bookstore or library.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (February 20, 2012)

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