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The Occult World of Jack Parsons

John Carter
Introduction by Robert Anton Wilson



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A Marvel Walked Among Us

by Robert Anton Wilson

“I seem to be living in a nation that simply does not know what freedom is.”

—John Whiteside Parsons¹

This book tells the life story of a very strange, very brilliant, very funny, very tormented man who had at least three major occupations (or vocations); he also had no less than four names. He acted as scientist, as occultist, as political dissident and often as a simple damned eejit (just like you and me).

Scientists, aware of his tremendous contributions to space science, generally call him John Parsons, and they’ve even named a crater on the moon after him. Those occultists who know of his work in their very specialized arts call him Jack Parsons, the name he himself preferred; in some magick lodges they consider him second only to Aleister Crowley as a progenitor of the New Aeon. His best-known book, *Freedom Is A Two-Edged Sword*, which increasingly influences the libertarian and anarchist movements, gives his name as John Whiteside Parsons on the cover and title page. And, as the present biography documents, this odd bird actually had the legal name Marvel Whiteside Parsons imposed on him at birth.

Oh, well, if my parents had named me “Marvel,” I would have changed my name, too, perhaps as often as Parsons did.

For utmost scientific clarity about matters usually left in mystic murk or psychobabble, I shall use all four of Our Hero’s names: John Parsons for the scientist, John Whiteside Parsons for the libertarian philosopher, Jack Parsons for the occultist, and Marvel Parsons for the original template: an alienated and sometimes naive boy, a child of divorce, who tried to find and liberate what occultists call his True Self by creating the other three Parsonspersons and permitting them

1. *Freedom Is A Two-Edged Sword*, by John Whiteside Parsons, Falcon Press, Las Vegas, 1989, p 10.

to fight brutal wars in the loneliness of his passionate brain until all three became One. When endured helplessly by a truly fractured personality, we generally call this civil war in the psyche Multiple Personality Disorder: when deliberately pursued as a path of Illumination leading through Hell and Purgatory toward a vision (at least) of Paradise, we have no name for it in our current culture but those few who, like Parsons, have taken the hermetic oath to Will and Dare and Know and Keep Silence simply call it magick (pronounced mage-ick, as in the Three Magi).

Marvel Parsons, born in 1914 in Los Angeles but raised mostly in the nearby town of Pasadena, began life like all of us in what Tibetans call the Void and the Chinese call *wu-hsin* (no mind). Gradually, out of the Void, form emerged. He made the distinction between Marvel and Everything Else; a glass wall then separated Marvel from Everything Else. He gradually identified various parts of Everything Else, as soon as he learned their names.

Fatherless, Marvel had a conservative middle class mother who loved him a bit too ardently (she committed suicide within a few hours after his death, 17 June 1952). She also taught him to hate his absent father, a proven “adulterer.” (Horrors!) Developing an early interest in psychology, Marvel diagnosed himself as having a classic Oedipus complex, a compulsive antipathy to “Patriarchy” (he used the word before the Feminists made it trendy) and an equally intense loathing for any and all Authority symbols, especially “God the Father.”

But let us look at 1914, the year of Parsons’ birth, more closely. Whatever you think of astrology, with its extraterrestrial bias, a “secular horoscope” limited to Earthly portents always provides amusing insights. The terrestrial world that shaped Marvel Parsons looked like this:

The First World War had started on July 28 that year; before 1914 ended the first aerial bombing of civilian populations occurred (Germany did it to France), and the bloody battles of the Marne, Tannerberg, Ghent and especially Ypres demonstrated that “civilized” modern humans could act even more inhumanely and insanelly than any barbarians of the past.

Police arrested the legendary labor hero Joe Hill in Utah on January 13 for a murder he almost certainly did not commit, and the State executed him the following year. His last words, “Don’t weep for me, boys—organize!” became a mantra to union members for decades after.

In Colorado, John D. Rockefeller's hired goons killed 21 people (including 11 children) in a clash with other labor "radicals." Leftists protested outside Rockefeller's New York office and got arrested for it: a court order banned any other people with signs or banners from parading in front of that sacrosanct shrine of the Almighty Dollar. Novelist Upton Sinclair appeared the next day with a blank sign, telling reporters that free speech had died. Suffragettes marched on Washington June 28, demanding equal rights for women.

In England, *Dubliners*, the first book by an Irish author named James Joyce, appeared; and in America Edgar Rice Burroughs brought forth *Tarzan of The Apes*. Musically, we all acquired three major treasures, "The Colonel Bogey March," "Saint Louis Blues" and "12th Street Rag." In film, D.W. Griffith's *The Mother and the Law* rawly showed the abuse of women by "the Patriarchy."

Margaret Sanger introduced the term "birth control" in *The Woman Rebel* and then fled to England to avoid imprisonment for the "crime" of publishing explicit details on contraception.

Charles Taze Russell, founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses, announced that the apocalypse would begin on October 2—coincidentally or synchronistically, the very day Marvel Whiteside Parsons [who would later, as Jack Parsons, call himself the AntiChrist] emerged from his mother's womb, or from even darker places, and began to investigate and meddle with this planet.

Going back to England again: also in 1914, Aleister Crowley (rhymes with "holy") and his current mistress, violinist Leila Waddell, staged something called "The Rites of Eleusis" in London—several nights of quasi-masonic ritual, music, poetry, ballet and drama. On the first night, the actors informed the audience, Nietzsche-fashion, that "God is dead" and mourned and grieved over the departed deity: things became even stranger after that, like the bardos in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and on the last night the audience received "The Elixir of the Gods," a wine containing a high dosage of the psychedelic drug mescaline. While they willynilly entered Chaos and the Void a chorus announced the dawning of a New Aeon based on Rabelais' Law of Thelema—"Do What Thou Wilt" . . .

And Doublemint chewing gum appeared on the market, produced by William Wrigley . . .

All of this undeniably influenced Marvel as much as, or more than, any distant stars or planets. The horrors of World War I imprinted him with a wounded perception of the dark side of

“human nature”: some parts of *Freedom Is A Two-Edged Sword* sound as bitter as Swift or Twain at their most misanthropic. Marvel also acquired a genuine sympathy for working people, and an awareness of the brute force behind Capitalism and Capitalist Governments never left him: although an ultra-individualist himself, he had more than one Marxist friend (which got him virtually tarred and feathered during the McCarthy era).

Standing there as big as life
 And smiling with those eyes:
 “What they forgot to kill,” said Joe
 “Went on to organize.”

Margaret Sanger and the suffragettes also left a mark: no male writer since John Stuart Mill in the 19th Century has shown more empathy for Feminism than John Whiteside Parsons.

“Saint Louis Blues” helped create the Jazz Age in which Marvel began to evolve from boy to man. And, like Russell and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, he grew up convinced that the world had entered a life-and-death battle between Cosmic (or at least Archetypal) Forces—but he enlisted on the side of the rebels, since he hated what we now call the logophallocentrism of “God the Father” even more than our current crop of Feminist theologians do. Although (as noted) he could see the Oedipal roots of this bias, he also perceived/conceived it as a decision for Light and Liberty against Tyranny and Superstition.

Aleister Crowley and his New Aeon would later transform Marvel into Jack Parsons.

I don’t know how Wrigley’s Doublemint gum fits into this list of terrestrial Signs and Omens surrounding the genesis of Marvel Parsons. But I feel sure some student of Crowleyana will write to me and explain it after this book appears.

Then another major influence mutated Marvel Parsons into John Parsons and John Whiteside Parsons and Jack Parsons: in his teens he discovered a despised and disreputable genre of pulp literature confusingly known (at the time) as either science-fiction or science-fantasy. Seen from the present, the sci-fi crowd of that age look like closet surrealists who had re-invented the Novel Of Ideas and tailored it for magazines with names like *Thrilling Wonder Tales*. The uncertainty about what to call their product typified the age of accelerated change in which Parsons and this literature both matured: after Jules Verne’s “fantasy” submarine appeared in the world’s real seas,

nobody with more brain cells than a chimpanzee or a Fundamentalist felt totally secure about the differences between the probable, the improbable and the totally impossible.

If Verne's submarine could become materialized, why not his rocket to the moon? The question excited a lot of other boys besides Marvel Parsons: but, unlike most of them, he did something about it. He became John Parsons, almost certainly (as this book documents) the one single individual who contributed the most to rocket science. Two of the institutions he helped organize, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at Pasadena and the Aerojet Corporation, still play large roles in space exploration.

You will learn more about John Parsons' acknowledged scientific achievements in the text to follow: I will concentrate on his other, still controversial labors. Just remember that when he started building rockets they seemed as "wacko" to most people as anything else he did. Yet his careful scientific experiments and theories liberated humanity from Terracentrism and showed us the path to a starry destiny.

Rocket engineer John Parsons also became friendly with the leading "fantasy" and "sci-fi" writers in the Los Angeles/Pasadena area and entered a subculture in which no idea seemed too crazy to discuss: a world where established science, fringe science, pseudo-science, philosophic speculation and visionary imagination all ran wild—in short, a world which anticipated and helped generate most of the "weird and kooky" ideas which have now infiltrated every aspect of our culture, except for the most reactionary Stone Age enclaves of Mississippi and the U.S. Congress.

It did not require much of a jump, then or now, to move from the Futurist-Fantast world into Sex, Drugs and Magick. If you really enjoyed the *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* movies; or if you ever, even in fun, told a friend "Live long and prosper" or "May the Force be with you"; or played Dungeons and Dragons, smoked a joint now and again, participated to any degree in the New Age and/or the Neo-Pagan revival—two popularized (diluted) aspects of Crowley's New Aeon—or even if you ever wanted to get the government off our fronts (sexual freedom) as well as off our backs (market freedom)—you have received part of the huge legacy of Jack Parsons and his merry crew of science buffs, sorcerers and subversives.

Look at it this way: in John Parsons' 1930s–1940s sci-fantasy world, everybody he knew had already started discussing the possible "humanity" and "human rights" of extraterrestrials and robots;

they created alternate societies much more rational and adventurous than most “normal” people of that time could possibly imagine; they assumed (partly due to the influence of Alfred Korzybski and General Semantics) that information and technology would further accelerate their synergetic accelerations even faster than they had in the previous century (Parsons’ friend, sci-fi-psi author A.E. van Vogt had studied with Korzybski personally); they created Alternative Worlds where anything currently considered goofy—from new economic systems to long-suppressed Gnostic doctrines—might function as efficiently as the pencil sharpener.

Robert Anson Heinlein, another friend of Parsons, wrote a novel, *Waldo*, in which all the arts of magick have not only won scientific acceptance but have become technologies used daily by everybody. Heinlein also wrote, a bit later, *Stranger In A Strange Land*, the first sci-fi novel to reach the *New York Times* bestseller list, and some still say Jack Parsons’ magick/libertarian ideas permeate every page of it—*pax*, Mr. Carter!

To leave the heady and trippy environment of chaps like van Vogt and Heinlein, and to encounter and endure the Official Reality of the U.S. of those days probably seemed to Parsons like time travel back to the Dark Ages.

In that Official Reality, Christian piety and Capitalist predation co-existed as equally sacred Idols, even though they totally contradict each other. Stupidity, superstition and intolerance imprisoned most Americans in medieval squalor, both mental and economic: many humans did not have the “humanity” or “human rights” that Parsons’ friends would grant to technically sophisticated robots (e.g. all those humans who had darker complexions than Snow White ranked as *non or-sub-human* in popular opinion and in law. We actually fought a war against fascism with a racially segregated army.) Almost all rational or adventurous ideas encountered blind bigotry and often violent persecution; contraception, divorce and abortion still remained illegal either locally or federally; homosexuality and bisexuality did not exist, or at least nobody in the major media could admit that they did exist; sex in general seemed so “dirty” that in the films of that time even married couples slept in separate beds, lest anyone suspect that they might occasionally fuck each other; all of the other delights of love enjoyed by most spouses remained illegal with penalties ranging as high as 20 years imprisonment; religious nutcases similar to Falwell and Robertson not only peddled hatred and intolerance to a gullible public, but nobody dared to fight back

or even make cynical jokes about them; when the first scientific report on human sexuality appeared, its author, Dr. Alfred Kinsey, got hit with everything but flying monkey-shit—according to his research associate, Dr. Pomeroy, Kinsey literally died prematurely from the abuse he suffered.

Of course, irrational fear and superstition still stalk this nation; but in those days, they totally *dominated* it.

Parsons could only conclude that Americans, who claimed to love freedom, actually feared it, hated it and wanted to smother it with more and more tyrannical laws. They had willingly surrendered their liberty to “lying priests, conniving judges, blackmailing police” and other servitors of tyranny, as he wrote in 1946.

But John Parsons, jet propulsion pioneer, had by then become Jack Parsons, sex-magician—after he discovered and joined the Ordo Templi Orientis.

The Ordo Templi Orientis alleges that it descends directly from the 18th Century Illuminati of Bavaria. Let us look into that for a moment.

WHO PUT THE LIGHT IN EN-LIGHT-ENMENT?

“I need not add that freedom is a dangerous thing. But it is hardly possible that we are all cowards.”

—*John Whiteside Parsons*²

Amid endless controversy about them, all agree that the Bavarian Illuminati began on May 1, 1776, in Ingolstadt, Bavaria, created by a Freemason (and former Jesuit) named Adam Weishaupt. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the Illuminati managed to influence many masonic lodges and gained “a commanding position” in the movement of anti-royalist, anti-Papist and pro-democratic “secular humanism.” They attracted such literary men as Goethe and Herder but the whole movement came to an end when the Bavarian government banned the Illuminati in 1785. So says the standard reference.

Many conspiracy hunters have more faith in the decidedly paranoid *Memoirs Of Jacobinism* of Abbe Augustin Barruel, who believed that the Illuminati merely regrouped under other front names after

2. *Freedom*, op. cit., p. 10.

1785, masterminded the French Revolution and still continued until the time he wrote (1806). Modern anti-Illuminists think it still continues today, although they often disagree as to whether the Illuminati really promotes secular humanism. Most Fundamtalists think they do, but others with livelier fantasies suspect them of unleashing Jazz, Rock 'n' Roll, communism, fascism, anarchism, Satanism, international banking, ritual child abuse, or some combination thereof.

According to masonic historian Albert G. Mackey, the Illuminati at its peak had only 2000 members in masonic lodges in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Hungary, and Italy. Mackey emphasizes that Baron Knigge, one of the most powerful and active members of the Illuminati, remained a devout Christian all his life and would not have worked so hard for the order if it really intended, as Abbe Barruel and others claim, the abolition of Christianity.

A new Order of the Illuminati appeared in 1880, founded by Freemasonic druggist Theodor Reuss in Munich. In 1896 Reuss, and fellow occultists Leopold Engel and Franz Hartmann co-founded the Theosophical Society of Germany, and in 1901 Engel and Reuss produced or forged a charter giving them authority over the re-established Illuminati of Weishaupt. In 1901, Reuss, Hartmann and metallurgist Karl Kellner founded the Ordo Templi Orientis and about 1912 Reuss conferred the 9th degree of the Ordo Templi Orientis upon Aleister Crowley, claiming that Crowley already knew the occult secret of that degree. (Crowley—rhymes with holy, remember?—already possessed the 33rd degree of the Scottish Rite and the 97th degree of the Order of Memphis and Mizraim.) Reuss later appointed Crowley his successor as Outer Head of the Ordo Templi Orientis. The Inner Head presumably remains invisible and unavailable to the un-Illuminated. (Hint: meditate on the Zen koan, “What wonderful magician makes the grass green?”)

Crowley includes Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the 18th Century Illuminati, among the Holy Saints in his Gnostic Catholic Mass, performed regularly in all Ordo Templi Orientis lodges. But that list of Holy Saints also includes also such odd blokes as King Arthur, Mohammed, Parsifal, Buddha, Rabelais, Pope Alexander Borgia, Swinburne, Paracelsus, Sir Francis Bacon, John Dee, Goethe, Wagner, Nietzsche, Simon Magus, King Ludwig II (“the mad king of Bavaria”) and painter Paul Gauguin . . .

Before dying, Crowley appointed one Karl Germer (a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp) his successor as Outer Head, but Germer

himself neglected to attend to that little detail, and when he died suddenly several claimants arose. I counted 1005 competing Outer Heads at one time in the mid-1980s, myself among them. (I had received that honor from a group of rebels against Kenneth Grant, an embattled Outer Head in London, who still calls himself the only real Outer Head. I always carry the card Grant's disloyal opposition sent me; it says "The Bearer of This Card is a Genuine and Authorized Outer Head of the Ordo Templi Orientis, so PLEASE treat him right" and magically/anachronistically has the signature of Aleister Crowley—or of a skillful forger.)

Over on this side of the pond, the federal courts have ruled that the title of Ordo Templi Orientis belongs only and always to the guys and gals represented on the World Wide Web and have further granted it tax-exempt status as a charitable corporation and religious entity. This group descends directly from the 1930s–1940s Agape Lodge of the OTO, the one that Jack Parsons once led.

As we mentioned, Aleister Crowley became an initiate of the OTO in 1912. This happened because he had published a mystic treatise and/or book of dirty jokes perversely or paradoxically entitled *The Book Of Lies (Falsely So Called)*. The Outer Head at that time, Theodore Reuss came to Crowley and said that, since he, Crowley, knew the secret of the 9th degree, he had to accept that rank in the OTO and its attendant obligations. Crowley protested that he knew no such secret but Reuss showed him a copy of *The Book Of Lies* and pointed to a chapter which revealed the great secret quite openly. Crowley looked at his own words and "It instantly flashed upon me. The entire symbolism not only of Free Masonry but of many other traditions blazed upon my spiritual vision . . . I understood that I held in my hands the key to the future progress of humanity."³ Crowley, of course, does not tell us which chapter contains the secret. You can spend many happy hours, days, maybe even months or years, pouring over that cryptic volume seeking the right chapter and the final secret.

We should remember at this point that even before his involvement with the OTO Aleister Crowley also received training, sometimes briefly and sometimes lasting much longer, in such traditions as Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sufism; and we should note that he majored in organic chemistry at Cambridge University. He often reiterated his commitment to "the method of science, the aim of reli-

3. *The Book Of Lies*, by Aleister Crowley, Samuel Weiser Inc., York Beach, 1988. Introduction, p. 7.

gion.” His work as Outer Head turned the OTO in radical new directions, both scientific and sexual.

Now it gets really scary for the Fundamentalists.

SEX AND DRUGS AND ROCK AND ROLL

“In these experiences the ego will be totally altered or completely destroyed in the death that must precede a rebirth into life. The terror, agony and despair that accompany this process cannot be minimized.”

—John Whiteside Parsons⁴

Two recent books that shed some light on all these murky matters deserve some attention at this point—*The Hiram Key and The Second Messiah*.⁵ The authors of both books, Knight and Lomas, both Freemasons themselves, claim that they have received “support and congratulations” from “hundreds” of other masons—although they admit that their research has been greeted with hostile silence by the United Grand Lodge of England, one of the more conservative masonic bodies.

Basically, Knight and Lomas try to prove that masonry not only dates back to ancient Egypt—as only the most Romantic masons have hitherto claimed—but that it also served as a major influence on “Jerusalem Christianity,” the earliest form of the Christian faith, which St. Paul and other sex-maniacs persecuted and drove underground. When the official Romish Christianity became dominant, primordial or “Jerusalem” Christianity survived by hiding within various Gnostic “heresies,” Knight and Lomas say, and became a major force again only when rediscovered and accepted as their own secret inner doctrine by the Knights Templar. When the Templars were condemned by the Inquisition (1308) the survivors used various other names until emerging again as “Freemasons” in the 17th or 18th Centuries.

Parts of this thesis have appeared in other books—the underground survival of primordial Christianity, for instance, underlies the entire argument of the famous *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* by Baigent,

4. *Freedom*, op. cit., p. 56.

5. *The Hiram Key* by Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas, Century, 1996; *The Second Messiah*, by Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas, Element Books, 1997.

Lincoln and Leigh—but Knight and Lomas have put the puzzle together in a more convincing way than any of their precursors.

But what about the original Egyptian “mystery” out of which this underground tradition emerged? Do Knight and Lomas attempt to delve that far back and claim to find a convincing answer?

Indeed they do.

The central masonic “myth” of the widow’s son, Hiram—the builder of Solomon’s temple, murdered for refusing to reveal “the mason word” to three ruffians—derives from actual events in Egypt, they aver. The “mason word” does not mean a “word” in the usual sense but acts as coded euphemism indicating a secret. (“Another damned secret?” I can hear you howl. Patience!)

Every new pharaoh, before ascending the throne, had to visit heaven and become accepted among the gods. Only after this other-worldly journey could the pharaoh be accepted by the priests, *and by himself*, as one fit to fulfill the divine, as well as political, functions of kingship, as conceived in those days. This voyage to the highest stars, where the gods live, involved a magick ritual employing what Knight and Lomas call a “narcotic.” When the last pharaoh of the native dynasty refused to reveal the secrets of this ritual to the new Hyskos dynasty, they killed him in the manner of the widow’s son. The lost “word” = the details of the Ritual of Illumination and the name of the “narcotic” used.

It seems to me that Knight and Lomas have this last detail wrong, due to their ignorance of psycho-pharmacology. Narcotics do not allow you to walk among the stars and communicate with superhuman intelligences. They kill pain, they numb anxiety, they knock you unconscious; and they usually get you addicted: that’s all they do. Almost certainly, the magick potion used in the ritual did not belong to the narcotic family but to the entheogens—the type of drugs also called psychedelics. Entheogens produce “mystic” and godly experiences, and at least one of them, and perhaps two, had widespread religious usage among the Indo-European peoples from ancient times, *Amanita muscaria* definitely and *psilocybin* possibly, both of them members of the “magic mushroom” group.

You can easily find learned works supporting this interpretation of how humanity first became aware of Higher Intelligences. See especially Pujarich’s *The Sacred Mushroom*, Allegro’s *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*, Wasson’s *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*, Wasson et al., *Persephone’s Quest: Entheogens and the Origins of Religion*, LeBarre’s *Ghost Dance: Origins of Religion*, Peter

Lamborn Wilson's *Ploughing the Clouds: The Search for Irish Soma*, my own *Sex, Drugs and Magick*—and especially see Terence McKenna's *Food of the Gods*, which argues that all existing religions evolved from paleolithic rituals using entheogens and group sex to achieve ego-transcendence and cosmic consciousness. You can still see the ancient sexual symbolism even in such romish ikons as the Sacred Heart and the Cross: the former does not look like a heart at all but like a tumescent vagina and the latter has the shape of a penis and testicles.

Jack Parsons' magick and John Parsons' science have a closer unity than most people can imagine. They both aimed at the stars.

By the way, all over northern Europe traditional art shows the fairy-people and sorcerers surrounded by mushrooms, usually the "liberty cap" mushroom, now identified as psilocybin, the same used by Native American shamans for around 4000 years. The Irish Gaelic name for this fabulous fungus, *Pokeen*, means little god. ("Little fairy" in modern Gaelic, but *pook* derives ultimately from *bog*, the Indo-European root for "god.")

Crowley spoke for this tradition when he said true religion always invokes Dionysus, Aphrodite and the Muses, which he also called "wine, women and song."

Nowadays we call this magick trinity Sex and Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll, and celebrate them at Raves that hauntingly resemble the earliest stirrings of cosmic questing by ancestors who dressed in animal skins and looked even more like gorillas than we do.

I have saved the worst shock to "good, decent Americans" for the end of this section. In 1986, researchers found another (approximately) 2000-year-old manuscript near the same Nag Hammadi caves where the "Dead Sea Scrolls" had come to light. Translated into English by Mohammed al-Murtada and Francis Bendik under the title *The Secret Book Of Judas Of Kerioth*, this text depicts Jesus as the bisexual lover of both Mary Magdelene and St. John, and also describes the Last Supper as an entheogenic sacrament involving magic mushrooms. It has an introduction and running commentary by Dr. Maxwell Selander of Briggs-Melton Theological Seminary and you can get a copy from Abrasax Books in Corpus Christi, Texas. It will blow the circuits of any Fundamentalists you know . . .

Sort of sounds like the historical Jesus (as distinguished from the mythical Christ) had a lot in common with Jack Parsons, doesn't it?

THE ANTICHRIST

“The time to fight for freedom is the time when freedom is threatened, not the time when freedom is destroyed, for that later time is too late. Freedom is threatened now, the destruction of freedom is not far off. Now is the time to fight.”

—*John Whiteside Parsons*⁶

In every state of the Union, Fundamentalists still fight to ban all the science they dislike and prosecute all who teach it. To them, “traditional family values” denotes their right to keep their children as ignorant as their grandparents (and to hate the same folks grand-dad hated.)

Our government’s war against “sin,” i.e. against all forms of individual taste and whimsy, currently costs the taxpayers (federal and local) 450 billion dollars (\$450,000,000,000) *every year*, according to Peter McWilliams.⁷ This makes up the bill for all forms of government interference in people’s private lives—i.e. the footless and hopeless attempt to stomp out “consensual” or “victimless” crimes—porno, prostitution, gambling, recreational or religious use of entheogens, etc. Who decides what consensual or victimless acts should become “crimes”? The so-called Christians who drove original “Jerusalem Christianity” underground, established the Holy Inquisition and still seem to suffer from what H.L. Mencken called “the haunting fear that somebody, somewhere, might be having a good time”: the “lying priests, conniving judges, blackmailing police” denounced by John Whiteside Parsons in 1946. (Crowley, with his usual flair for humorous melodrama, called them the Black Brotherhood in his books, and it took me years to figure out whom he meant . . .)

In Newark, California, recently, police broke into the home of a Korean family, beat them all up and smashed all their furniture and dishes while allegedly looking for *verboden* drugs. They found no drugs, but the narcs explained to the press, “This is war.”⁸

In Minneapolis, more tragically, the police also broke into the home of an elderly black couple, using flash-bang grenades which set the building on fire and killed both husband and wife. They offered the same “explanation” as in Newark: “This is war.”⁹

6. *Freedom* op. cit. p. 39.

7. <http://www.mcwilliams.com>.

8. *Pissing Away The American Dream*, ed. by David Ross, Digit Press, Norcross, Georgia, 1991.

As Oliver Steinberg wrote, “It is inaccurate to speak of a War on Drugs . . . You don’t lock drugs up in jail, you lock up people . . . You can’t kill drugs—you kill people. Our government is not waging a war on drugs—it is waging a war on the people.”¹⁰

Due to a strange and nefarious union of the Fundamentalists and the fanatic wing of Feminism, we have had more than 60 witch-hunts or Satanic Panics since 1980. Thousands of lives ruined, mass hysterias, millions of dollars wasted on prosecutions that usually collapsed in court for lack of real evidence: a large price to pay for the destruction of the Bill of Rights. After digging in countless “mass graves” of alleged victims of human sacrifice, the FBI’s Behavioral Science Unit, which deals with serial killers, found no victims at all, at all, and concluded that the whole mania had no basis in fact—which led, of course, to charges that the FBI itself functioned as part of the Satanic conspiracy.¹¹

And none of this has anything to do with the original Jerusalem Christianity. It emerged only from the Papist pretenders in Rome and their Protestant imitators, who make up the whole of what most people think of as “Christianity.”

Nietzsche, who lived too soon to learn of that original Christianity, regarded what passes under that label as the worst disaster to ever befall humanity. As he wrote in *The Antichrist*:

The hatred of intellect, of pride, courage, freedom of intellect, is Christian; the hatred of the senses, of the delights of the senses, of all delight, is Christian . . . the concepts of “the other world,” “the last judgement,” “the immortality of the soul,” “soul” itself: they are torture instruments, they are systems of cruelty by which the priests became masters.¹²

Against this system of cruelty Nietzsche rebelled; and Crowley rebelled; and Jack Parsons rebelled: and because of them we now stand on the brink of an explosion of consciousness that literally can extend our minds and carry our bodies to the farthest stars.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. *Satanic Panic*, by Jeffrey S. Victor, Open Court, Chicago, 1993.

12. As cited in *The Heretic’s Handbook Of Quotations*, ed. by Charles Bufe, Sea Sharp Press, San Francisco, 1988, p. 177.

“No God. No Master.”

—Margaret Sanger¹³

As you have gathered by now, I do not regard Parsons and Crowley as Black Magicians or Satanists or anything of that sort. Magick has many aspects, but primarily it acts as a dramatized system of “psychology” (or neuro-linguistic meta-programming) to train us to break out of the cage of the socially conditioned ego and, by plunging directly into the Chaos and Void from which we emerged, experience a rebirth into a new sense of self, of world, and of chaos and void, knowing directly, by experience, that all these names hide the same hidden unity—the wonderful magician who makes the grass green, makes the sad man sad, makes the angry woman angry, and makes the loving heart overflow with further love endlessly.

Dr. John Lilly called this process “metaprogramming the human bio-computer”; Dr. Timothy Leary, conscious of his debts to both Crowley and Parsons, called it “serial re-imprinting” of our “reality-tunnel.”

As Terence McKenna often says in his lectures, you can do all this by yoga—but only if you can spare seven years of your life, or longer, sitting around an ashram meditating. Magick works faster, especially when united with the ancient shamanic ecstasies of full sexual release and the proper en-theo-gens.

Crowley said, and Parsons liked to quote him on this, “THERE IS NO GOD BUT MAN.” (That sounds “sexist” these days, but you all know what he meant. He also said “EVERY MAN AND EVERY WOMAN IS A STAR.”) To confuse this with atheism seems to me as wildly off the mark as confusing it with “Satanism.” It quite simply means that all ideas/perceptions/experiences of the divine or the immortal refer directly back to the latent powers of the mind that contains them. (In this context, see John 10:34.)

As Jack Parsons knew, and as Freudians will readily see for themselves, the whole magickal struggle in Parsons’ Babalon Working recounted in Chapters Seven and Eight unleashed, on one level, a violent confrontation with Marvel’s Oedipus Complex. Babalon repre-

13. Cited in *Heretic’s Handbook*, op. cit. p. 105.

sents the Mother and the Whore, the opposite archetypes of the male mind. To say it aloud, when making love to Babalon as Cameron, Jack Parsons did consciously what all men do unconsciously: he fucked his mother. After 2000 years of Christian sex-hate and sex-guilt, only in that total life-and-death battle with all inner inhibitions could he achieve that liberation which all of us seek, all of us fear, and all of us confront eventually, in the hour of our death, when we finally don't give a damn anymore about what other people think.

**"Only in the irrational
and unknown direction
can we come to
wisdom again."**

—John Parsons, letter to Cameron, 1946