



Fire in the Madhouse

"Fire In The Madhouse :Trauma And The Human Condition : Volume V offers us a provocative exploration of the flurry of conflicts and preposterous events that swirled globally throughout 2016. Our gratitude to Anngwyn St. Just for providing us with a bit more light." (Francesca Mason Boring, author of **Healing Through Constellations, Ceremony and Ritual, and Feather Medicine.**)

"Anngwyn St Just is one of the truly original and innovative thinkers in the field of traumatology. With clarity and wit she demonstrates how trauma becomes embedded within the very fabric of space and time and how traumatic experience plays out in our lives, from generation to generation". (Peter A. Levine, **Waking The Tiger: Healing Trauma and In An Unspoken Voice. How the Body Releases Trauma And Restores Goodness**)

"Fire in The Madhouse is the latest in Dr. St. Just's growing list of outstanding books on trauma and the human condition. Anngwyn's perspective and deep insights on collective trauma and the "bigger picture" of needed larger societal and global changes are not just welcome but more than ever before, needed, if we are to survive, and beyond this, transform the madhouse world we live in".) John Bilorusky Ph.D. President, The Western Institute for Social Research, Berkeley, California.

This current volume, a fifth in a series of **Trauma and the Human Condition** books " (blogs+books) which continue on as my most recent compendium of monthly online blogs offered throughout the calendar year through auspices of the **Western Institute For Social Research**, in Berkeley, California, ongoing since

2011. While most entries appear as they did on the WISR web site, some have been expanded and updated as new information has become available. As has been the case, in all previous volumes within this **Trauma and the Human Condition** series, my overall focus as a systemically oriented social traumatologist continues to remain, for the most part, on those issues having to do with those social and global traumas which contribute to the ongoing process of increasingly accelerated social change, due to globalization, and the internet, in conjunction with also increasingly complex and problematic trans-national, corporate and state sponsored surveillance technologies.

My title for this latest volume comes from a lecture offered by ethno-botanist Terrance McKenna, a seminal figure in various consciousness raising movements during the sixties and seventies while I was a graduate student at U.C. Berkeley, referred to by some more conservative souls as "Bezerkely, Nevertheless, I absolutely loved it there as both student, teacher and resident of that local community surrounding that seriously multi-culti, Bay Area university and remained active for over 30 years in a surrounding on and off campus, local and decidedly adventurous, consciousness awareness communities. No apologies.

While I never had enough real courage to imbibe any of those truly esoteric and exotic substances, cosmic mushrooms, datura, ayahuasca, DMT and so on from which Terrance derived many of his insights, I felt that his return trips had something to offer for those of us less willing to journey into those mysterious, unknown and potentially dangerous realms. On one occasion, which I cannot remember when, Terrance offered a lecture entitled "Fire in the Madhouse. In the End of Time " and the image immediately resonated with our then and still current situation. In this lecture, Terrance opined that when an entire species is preparing to move on to the next dimension the entire destiny of the planet is tied up in this - we are not acting as our selves. We happen to be the point species for a transformation that will affect every living thing on this planet is caught up in this, the entire destiny of the planet at its conclusion. While I don't really resonate with his apocalyptic vision, I would agree that the hour is late and our situation is dire.

Signs and symptoms of our collective insanity are everywhere and this Strangelovian leap year of 2016 produced many surprises, aptly described by some as a truly

terrible, surreal 12 months that have rendered satire obsolete. Confusion reigns and in the words of British science fiction writer Anna Butler, 2016 is a year..."that stinks like a three week - dead tuna fish rolled in a batter of camel dung. It has brought us little but loss, war, death of innocents, vicious politics and near death of values such as tolerance and acceptance. All it has given us in exchange is noxious politics, dangerous selfishness and bigotry." Strong words, odiferous even, and still I have never been so glad to see a year come to an end. If there is any good news, 2016's beyond surreal events have provided pure gold manna reigning down upon our late night comedians, especially those specializing in political satire and fake news. Yet, the term "fake news " was appropriated by the controllers as an neo-Orwellian attack on alternative media and any other anti-establishment site in a ham fisted attempt to limit free speech, manage leaks, obscure truth and blame it all on the Russians in a troublesome flashback to the Cold War, Red Scare Fifties.

In keeping with this manipulative insanity, if there was one word for 2016, it would likely be FEAR. With this in mind, I began the blogs in this volume with "Our Year of Fear " a dark comedic account of a "killer squirrel " terrorizing Northern California communities, all of which is absolutely true and therefore no need to fabricate or even embellish any details. Given that this volume is about 2016, the craziness continues with Al-Gebera and irrational, truly ignorant, out of control Islama- phobia and then that silly Killer Clown craze that shut down public schools during our Halloween season.

Given my profession, I do need to travel a lot and this is also reflected in this Volume V, as has also been with the previous volumes in this ongoing series. For those who are new to the subject of collective trauma, I felt that it was time to update and clarify my understanding of those traumas which involve groups larger than the family, communities, tribes, clans, nations and the biosphere herself and so I felt that this would be the optimum place to begin this latest addition to the series. (**Fire In The Madhouse**, 2017 is now available through www.amazon.com)