

## Wilderness House Literary Review 9/1

*James Grabill*

### **The State of Knowledge**

*(information found in The Scientific American, October 2013)*

In recent decades, the latest New York City residents include white-tailed deer, coyotes, and wild turkeys. Coyotes have been seen to adapt to the flow of traffic and understand stoplights.

Radar satellites and planes are monitoring the epidemic of sinkholes in the Dead Sea recreation area. They can measure elevation changes of a millimeter and predict the next collapses. One hope is to use this technology in Florida.

It turns out taste receptors in mice aren't limited to the mouth and nose. They're located in the brain, the guts, the kidneys, and other places. A correlation exists between healthy taste and healthy sperm. Sperm, it seems, also have taste and smell receptors that help them find the egg.

Planarian flatworms remember their surroundings. If one loses its head, it'll grow another and still retain its memory.

A new highly accurate thermometer measures the speed of sound in a chamber of gases to determine temperature, challenging one of the traditional definitions of Kelvin.

NASA's readings of the cosmic microwave background show the universe is lopsided, as if early on it collided with a neighboring universe. More will be known after data from the Planck satellite of the European Space Agency, which is studying the microwave polarization, helps to determine whether the old view of the universe is incorrect.

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### The Transmigration of Matter

Atoms end up leaving the almond or wheat, raccoon or viola bow. Pieces of ancient pottery spread through lives.

Infinitesimal flakes from circling billions of suns have entered the transmissions where the intricate enginery of opposites has advanced.

The pulse of small cells living in veins moves past equivalencies. The long-term evolutionary project of these cells that constructed the brain ripples out of sacramental gaps within the continuum.

However cushioned from detection the small species have been, one mistake in front of the wrong eyes and endlessness ends. Gills rake through the undersea side of the visible, carving the face in sinuous slews and falls.

And yet the world's nowhere, if not in the hour, if not at the moment, when the sense that more's shareable of the whole can dawn in the middle of anyone.

A few more clavichord keyboards may be missing from this staggering transience where so many bodies wake or sleep, where the exquisite long-term genome, recollected and solar-powered, demonstrates the hunger for something larger than a bite to eat.

Long distance stirs up the night, as the mineral beauty of finch wings has evolved above and beyond us, and little happens in petroglyphs on rocks that dwarf the possible ways to feel.

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### In the Sanctuary of Our Midwest Wisdom Religion

Dark-red ancestral robes in the stained-glass sanctuary, neighbors in the choir sitting then standing, no sitting in the loft over the altar it looks like close to the professor with his Bach hair the wind blew as he walked in rehearsing.

He's half sitting, half standing, playing four parts of the hymn on the organ at once opening pipe-tornado tremolo, getting it to reverberate up through stacks with their diameters of sound people are making, which stirs up a number of private beliefs, whatever ways they'd be put into wording, however much anyone's in sync with another side of the unknown.

The benediction withdraws and begins as it will, in slow motion, in the narthex in the Swiss Alps, in the powerful word, in the reformation of the allegory which is identity, after the stride down the red-carpeted center aisle, then half a turn soft right, half left, while the spirit people keep singing under a stained-glass image of the donkey hauling pregnant Mary through history of an old Bethlehem city lane, Mary flanked by the remembered apostles who stand there in Ohio, robes and sandals, making their gestures, the ancestors of no one in the sanctuary.

It's better to not think, in the flood of luminous community pulse deepening in the wash of rich scarlet and primal blue joining a person through the continuum, communing from within the art in windows of hand-crafted belief in the colors. Better not to think of apostles overseas or the word foreign, to make it real when in need of picturing spirit people, the still-the-same who live separated from the body and still answer to the usual in the ever-present, those who've gone and yet live where the father of churches has his mansion, maybe on another side of this whole sense or not.

Through belief, through belief, through belief all was and is, as all shall be, belief being serious about its work, meaning being the beautiful end, after professing your meanings, whittling belief down to acting as you'd want others to act, as you'd want them to be, first and last right with you, your friends casting not stone but feeding the masses, taking on color, so having it within where you go, not needing to look through the window, if you're talking to those who're lost or singing to a baby.