

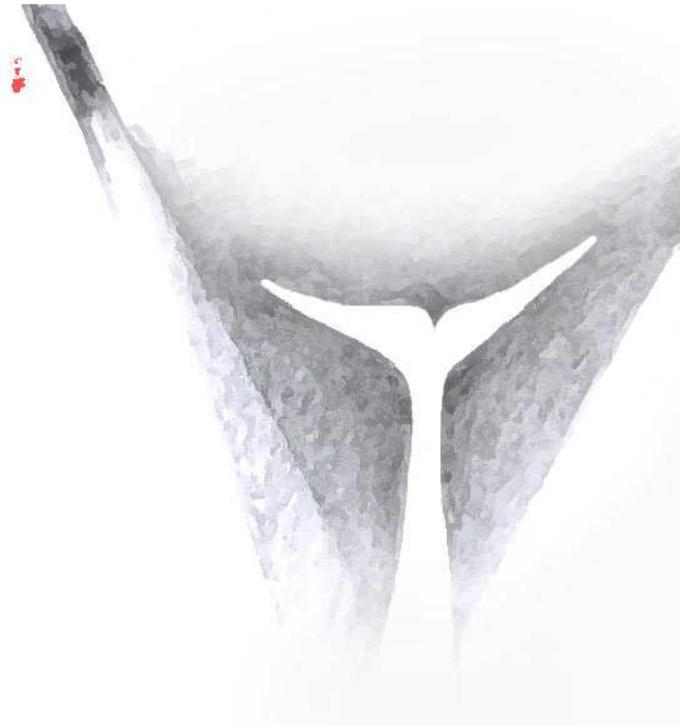
Dear Hugh,

An open letter to a recently departed friend.

It may not be John and Yoko in *The New York Times*, but what could be more open than a letter addressed across time and space, from here to anywhere – in this infinite sphere of which the centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere? For the past couple of years I was unwilling to call you, due to having to shout so loudly over the phone, and visits were out of the question as my father's health declined. But why did I not write to you? That is what I asked myself as soon as you had passed away. There are always regrets I guess. It goes with the territory belonging to death, that most exacting critic.

None could have been more supportive of me in my work for the TS than you, or more interested in my other prospects, including personal ones. So I thank you most sincerely. Just now a family of ducks is making their way past my front yard in Bundanoon. Given your love of the birds visiting your garden, I like to think that the ducks have said hello. I enjoyed your company immensely, partly because we shared a number of intellectual passions: especially the work of David Bohm, and an approach to the work of the TS that is not widely shared. I miss you for that reason, quite keenly.

You missed the Pluto fly-by in less than a nanosecond of cosmic time, but you missed it nonetheless. It is interesting to contrast this event with the moon landing, which also took place in my lifetime. In 1632 Gilileo Gallilei suggested that 'If you could see the earth illuminated when you were in a place as dark as night, it would look to you more splendid than the moon'. And so it did, to Edgar Mitchell, and many others. Nearing the end of the Apollo 14 mission, Captain Mitchell had an experience that radically altered his worldview, and led to the founding of IONS (Institute of Noetic Sciences). It convinced him that the deepest mystery of the universe is consciousness: that empty space in which all lives and minds and things float. As stated on the IONS site (<http://noetic.org/directory/person/edgar-mitchell>), he saw 'that the beautiful blue world to which he was returning is part of a living system, harmonious and whole – and that we all participate, as he expressed it later, "in a universe of consciousness"'. Seeing the photographs of the earth from space led Archibald Macleish to remark: 'To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold – brothers who know now they are truly brothers'.



While such insights and experiences have been vouchsafed some outer space travellers, the world has been turning to the space within but slowly: and as to knowing that we are one family, that penny hasn't quite dropped. It is too early to say what insights might emerge from closer acquaintance with Pluto, in the outer reaches of our solar system, but I keep returning to the insights of the Chāndogya Upanishad:

'... as far, verily, as this world space extends, so far extends the space within the heart. Within it, indeed, are contained both heaven and earth, both fire and air, both sun and moon, lightning and the stars. Whatever there is of Him in this world and whatever is not, all that is contained within it'.

I would like to leave you for now with a short essay composed by David Bohm for the memorial service of an old friend, which was then also read at his own memorial service. It is an echo, perhaps unconscious, of Krishna's speech to Arjuna on the battlefield depicted in the *Bhagavad Gita*. I found Bohm's essay in *Infinite Potential The Life of David Bohm* by F. David Peat (Basic Books 1997):

*In considering the relationship between the finite and the infinite, we are led to observe that the whole field of the finite is inherently limited, in that it has no independent existence. It has the appearance of independent existence, but that appearance is merely the result of an abstraction of our thought. We can see this dependent nature of the finite from the fact that every finite thing is transient.*

*Our ordinary view holds that the field of the finite is all that there is. But if the finite has no independent existence, it cannot be all that is. We are in this way led to propose that the true ground of all being is the infinite, the unlimited; and that the infinite includes and contains the finite. In this view, the finite, with its transient nature, can only be understood as held suspended, as it were, beyond time and space, within the infinite.*

*The field of the finite is all that we can see, hear, touch, remember and describe. This field is basically that which is manifest, or tangible. The essential quality of the infinite, by contrast, is its subtlety, its intangibility. This quality is conveyed in the word spirit, whose root meaning is "wind, or breath." This suggests an invisible but pervasive energy, to which the manifest world of the finite responds. This energy, or spirit, infuses all living beings, and without it any organism must fall apart into its constituent elements. That which is truly alive in the living being is this energy of spirit, and this is never born and never dies.*

With much affection,  
Dara Tatrav

Illustration *Whale Tail* by the artist Muriel Brown