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A READER'S JOURNAL

Colour, GA#291

12 Lectures in Dornach from 1914 to 1924

by

Rudolf Steiner

Translated by John Salter (Lec. 1-3) and Pauline Wehrle (Lec. 4-12)

Includes Foreword, Synopses, References, and Notes

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A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2012

Chapter: Spiritual Science



The title of this book poses a problem for me. During my reading and reviewing of over 200 of Steiner's books and lecture series, I have had to deal with a lot of Britishisms, that is, words translated from German into British spellings which are different from American spellings. The word *colour* is one of many of those spellings which seems weird to American readers, including such as these: *centre*, *theatre*, *flavour*, *recognise*, *lustre*, and many more, all of which both my spell-checker and my American sensibility balk at using. Whenever I encounter these spellings, I change them automatically, knowing there is nothing magical behind their usage, only the mundane fact that British translators converted Rudolf Steiner's words from his German into their own brand of English. Now for my dilemma: do I change the title of this book from *Colour* to *Color*? To avoid confusion, I will maintain the title of the book, but continue my customary practice of converting all spelling to American spellings, even the word *colour* into *color* within this review. I expect this will meet with approval from all my American readers.

My first reading of this book was about 1998 or so, and the book was a copy a friend of mine had loaned me. It was early in my study of Steiner's works, and I understood very little of what I read, so I deferred writing a review of the book till later, when I could read my own copy, making notes as I read and with the added plus of knowing more about what I was reading. I always say, when studying something new, it's best to know all about it before you start. The physical book I am reviewing now was published in 2005 and I received my copy in October, 2006. I began reading it during a cruise through the Panama Canal in January, 2012 and finished it a month or so later.

Why has this book taken me so long to get around to reviewing? I can't say for sure, but my reluctance surely has something to do with my academic training as a physicist in Newton's theory of light and color. Clearly I will have to deal with the conflict between Newton and Steiner on the issue of color, so I wish to alert you ahead of time as we undergo this study together, not just a journey into the realm of color, but into the realm of Bobby Matherne. Pull up a seat, fasten the red seat belt around your waist, and let's speed off into this *terra incognita* together.

Steiner was only 21 when Karl Schröerer recognized that young Steiner's knowledge of both Goethean and physics' theories of color made him the ideal choice to edit Goethe's scientific writings for publication.

Here's what Steiner wrote in his Introduction:

[page 1] 'The processes in the starry heavens were observed long before Kepler and Copernicus, but they discovered the laws. The kingdom of organic nature was observed long before Goethe, but he discovered its laws. Goethe is the Copernicus and Kepler of the organic world.'

This was a bold statement for Steiner to make, and its impact and import has barely brushed much less entered the psyche of the establishment scientific community of today, a hundred years or so later. Ask almost any scientist what Goethe was famous for, and they will not likely say that he was the *Copernicus and Kepler of the organic world*. Instead they might mention that he was the author of *Faust*.

Much of the material I would have covered in my review of this book, I have already covered in my previous review of [*The Light Course*](#), which I heartily recommend to my Good Readers, either before or after reading this review. Thus said, I will focus on specific comments in this book which will not repeat what I covered in the more comprehensive *Light Course* one.

In the time of the Atlantean culture, the world was shrouded in a heavy mist so thick that one negotiated through the world and recognized people by the spiritual light which shone from their bodies. If we had a green light friend, we could recognize him immediately by his distinctive green aura; a pink aura would be someone else, a lavender aura, another person. One could barely see the outlines or any light reflected from the surface of a person during that time. The mist came tumbling to Earth during the time referred to as the Flood, and once the mist was in liquid form, no longer suspended in the air, Man was able to see a rainbow for the first time because it requires direct sunlight upon a distant mist to create a rainbow; no rainbows are possible in a thick mist. What Rudolf Steiner strived to do was to paint the colors of the auras which surround people yet today, but because of our evolution into viewing only the surfaces of things, we have focused only on the colors reflected from the surface of objects, up until now. Steiner, able to see the auric spiritual colors, strove to find a medium and a method to depict them.

If one looks carefully at the *aquarelle* on the cover of this book, you will find an auric painting of two people facing each other. Yes, we see their faces, but the entire scene is painted in auric or spiritual colors which seem to flow through the objects painted.

We often say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, it seems to shine through the object we admire. On the other hand, one might say that ugly is the mask of beauty, i.e., ugly conceals its true nature and prevents its inner beauty from shining forth. (Page 11, Synopses)

He said in a Berlin lecture on July 3, 1918:

[page 3, 4 Foreword] 'When we paint the spiritual content of the world we are not dealing with figures illuminated by a source of light, but with figures shining with their own light.' . . . An aura is an object that shines with its own light, therefore the whole character of painting is entirely different. (GA 181)



We humans living in the Fifth-Post-Atlantean Epoch face a paradox about colors: we speak of their subjective effect on us, but look around at the objects they bounce off of for an objective reason they affect us in a certain way. In the "ether vibrations," which Newton and other scientists call light waves and light rays, we humans have wandered far away from the direct flowing experience of color into mere abstract concepts.

[page 16] For in conjuring up all these ether vibrations nothing is left of the real stuff of our world of color. In order to grasp color objectively we must try to keep within the world of color itself and not leave it; then we may hope to penetrate its real nature.

It was quite a chastening experience for me when I discovered that I had bought into the deep and pervasive metaphysical nature of materialistic science. Nowhere else can it be experienced so well as in the study of color, e.g., from Newton's simple prism experiment where a pinpoint of light creates a rainbow in a darkened room and physicists claim that all colors are located in the light beam. Yet, rightly understood, every light beam has only a subset of specific colors in it depending on the path it took on its way into one's eye. Only then does color exist; never in a physicist's instrument. Even in spectrometers, we can measure wavelengths, and attach probable colors to them, but no color exists until the light enters a human eye and is interpreted by a human brain. Rudolf Steiner does not talk metaphysically about *what is in a light beam*, but rather speaks of the flowing of colors objectively, talking about what can actually be experienced. On the other hand, materialists, following Newton, speak of color with subjectively introjected abstract logical constructs⁽¹⁾.

On pages 20 to 25, Steiner gives objective experiences of various familiar colors and justifies them. One can compare these to one's own responses to determine if these are objective in the sense of being the

same for most people.

**[page 26] Green represents the lifeless image of the living.
Peach-blossom represents the living image of the soul.
White or light represents the soul's image of the spirit.
Black represents the spiritual image of the lifeless.**

Green is ideal for playing surfaces for games of all kinds, Steiner says, and so we see card tables, gambling tables, pool tables, and athletic fields of all kinds laid out in green.

[page 31] Because a game is a limited, pedantic activity, completely philistine, we can quite easily associate it with a room in which there are green tables. An invitation to play cards at lilac-colored table would be enough to make one want to run away!

That feeling of aversion, of antipathy, to wrong colors is identical to the feeling I get when I see Hawaii and Boise State University teams play at home on artificial turfs of bright blue. Imagine that: *blue fields!* I cannot bear to watch more than a few minutes of a football game on a blue field.

[page 32] Imagine a surface with blue spread evenly over it. This is something which leads us away from the purely human. When Fra Angelico painted his even, blue surfaces he summoned, as it were, something divine into the earthly world. He felt he could paint an even blue only when he wished to bring something divine into the earthly world. He would never have allowed himself to do this for the purely human situation; for blue, because of its very nature and character, will not readily submit to being a flat, even surface. It needs the divine to intervene for blue to be spread evenly.

Last time, I checked football was a purely human situation with very little divine intervention, outside of occasional "Hail Mary" long pass plays which rarely succeed.

**[page 32] Yellow must shine outwards.
Blue must shine inwards.
[page 34] Red affects me through its stillness.**

The universal use of red for stop signs is a practical use of red's affect on people. Red is a sign of danger in both signs and industrial equipment. A red light indicates a motor is running, for instance, and is more of a danger to a passerby when it is in operation⁽²⁾.

Next Steiner points to the luster in colors.

**[page 36] Black, white, green and peach-blossom have an image-character —
they are 'pictures' of something.
Yellow, blue and red have a luster-character — something shines from them.**

**[page 39] Yellow is the luster of the spirit.
Blue is the luster of the soul.
Red is the luster of the living.**

[page 41] The painters of earlier times, who had a natural feeling for such things, sensed the luster of the spirit in yellow. In yellow they looked up to the spirit, to the luster of the spirit. But they want to give earthly expression to the spirit. They had to give yellow weight. When, like Cimabue, they painted a gold ground, they gave the spirit a dwelling on earth; they realized the heavenly in their pictures. The figures could stand out from the gold ground, growing out of it as creation of the spirit.

Rarely do spiritual scientists apply a knockout punch to materialists, but Steiner was the Rocky Marciano of the spiritual boxing ring.

[page 44] Since physicists have in recent times regarded the theory of color as a part of optics, we find explanations of the nature of color in material objects worthy of recent physics. We find, for example, the characteristic explanation of the question: why is an object red? It is red because it absorbs all the other colors and reflects only red. This is an explanation characteristic of recent physics, for it is based more or less on the kind of logic which says: why is a man stupid? Fundamentally he is stupid because he has absorbed a great deal of cleverness and radiates only stupidity! If one turns this logical principle, so common in color theory, to the rest of life you see what interesting results occur!

Perhaps we need a Stupid Events Commission (SEC) as Jasper Fforde drolly proposed⁽³⁾, which could keep itself busy even if it only dealt with physics explanations of color effects.

[page 44] You will recall how we first came upon the image character of the first four colors we dealt with. We saw how it was a question of one form of existence producing its shadow or image in another. We saw how green arises when the living appears as image in the lifeless, and then how peach-blossom color arises when the soul appears as image in the living. We saw also how white arises when the spiritual forms its image in the soul, and, finally, how black arises when the lifeless forms its image in the spiritual. There we have all the colors which have the character of image; the rest have the character of luster. In the external world, green is the most clearly visible expression of this image character. Black and white are in a certain sense borderline cases and for this reason are not generally considered by many to be colors. Peach-blossom, we have seen, is really only to be grasped in movement. Thus in green the image-character is most typically portrayed and with it we have the color which is really attached to the external world, in particular to the plant kingdom. In the plant kingdom, therefore, the origin of 'fixed' color as image really becomes apparent. It is now perhaps a question of discovering in the green of plants what is the true quality, the essential nature of green. In doing so we must go a good deal further with the problem than would normally be considered necessary today.

There was an old saying that the "Moon is made of green cheese", which saying is lost in the Halls of History since Man landed on the Moon in 1969. On that night, we watched the Moon Landing at a friend's house. He helped design Apollo Eleven's Saturn rocket boosters for Boeing at its Michoud facility in New Orleans. His wife made a globe of green cheese to resemble the Moon and planted a tiny American flag on its top. We began eating the cheese ball, not knowing for sure whether the Moon was made of green cheese, but by the end of the evening, we knew for sure it wasn't. The origin of the old saying escaped me until I read Steiner's [Outline of Occult Science](#), when I discovered that the Earth was in a complete vegetative state during the Old Moon period of evolution, with everything the color of green and the consistency of cheese! Not only was the Moon once made of green cheese, but the Earth itself was part of the Moon and it was also made of green cheese.

[page 45] The plants were formed in the fluid conditions of the Old Moon evolution when there was no solid matter. This fluid state was permeated with flowing color. There was no need for it to be fixed to anything, or at least only to the surface. Only on the surface did the fluid element begin to solidify [RJM: e.g. like cheese]. So it would be possible to say, looking back to this earlier stage of evolutions, that in the formation of the plant we are concerned with an essential fluid condition in which green, as also color generally, existed in flowing movement.

Steiner's Lecture 3 entitled "Color in Matter — Painting Out of Color" would be better subtitled as "Painting Out of Pots of Color" rather than from a palette. To penetrate the essential nature of color, we must create a luster which is inwardly shining. (Page 51)

[page 51] If a wall is depicted in a painting it will not be a wall, but only the image of one, unless the color is made inwardly luminous. We must make the colors shine inwardly; they will then, in a certain sense, become mineralized. For this reason it would be good to give up painting from the palette, which leads merely to smearing coloring matter onto a surface and makes it impossible to evoke the inwardly shining quality in the right way. We should try to paint increasingly from pots of liquid paint with color that is liquid and has a flowing, shining quality. Generally speaking, the introduction of the palette has brought a materialistic form of painting, a failure to understand the nature of color — for color is never really absorbed by any material body but lives within it and emanates from it. Therefore, when I put my colors on a surface I must make them shine inwardly.

Steiner's point is that it is time for us to untrap color, to release it from the prism prison of Newton's physics, to ban the use of lines and diagrams when discussing and trying to understand the flowing nature of color. It came as a revelation to me some forty years ago when I discovered that my white coffee cup was not white! Its color depended on the light reflected upon it by its surroundings, its shadowy side was a different color from its bright side, etc. As a physicist I had my artistic side disabled by those lines and diagrams.

[page 57, 58] Just because color is such an ever-changing element it is most desirable that the painter does not allow his color to solidify on the palette, as he ususally does today, but keeps it fluid in the pot. It is just running away from the issue, however, when the physicist comes along and draws his lines on the board and tries to explain yellow or violet by means of these lines. This does not really belong to physics: physics is only concerned with light in space. But color — color can only be studied properly by taking into account the realm of soul. For it is sheer nonsense to say that color is merely subjective. And if one goes on to maintain that there is some objective cause outside that works upon us, upon our I, this is nonsense — and implies an inadequate conception of the I. The I itself is within the color. The human I and astral body are not to be separated at all from color; they live in color and inasmuch as they are united with the color they have an existence outside the physical body. It is the I and the astral body which reproduce color in the physical and etheric bodies. That is the point. The whole notion of there being an objective element in color which has an effect upon a subjective element is thus nonsense; for the I and the astral body are within the color anyway and enter with the color. Color actually bears the I and astral body into the physical and etheric bodies. The whole conception must simply be turned upside down if one is to penetrate to reality.

Everything that has thus found its way into physics and been narrowed down into lines and diagrams must be released again. It would be a good idea if for a while the drawing of diagrams were barred from physics when color is spoken of and the attempt made to grasp the ever-changing movement and life of color.

Using a palette instead of pots results in portraits of people who resemble mannikins, none of whom appear to have any life in them. The first life which appeared in photographs came with the advent of the *snapshot* because before then all photographs were posed and required the subjects to stand absolutely still for minutes or seconds at a time. Suddenly a photograph could be snapped of a person with a genuine, unforced smile, and the history of photography of real people looking alive became possible. Painters need to replace their stagnant palettes with pots of liquid paint to progress to the snapshot stage where they can capture the life essence in living people. "Living portraits can only be painted when one really knows how to live with color." (Page 57)

Polar bears suck in the whiteness of their surroundings, just as humans did during our astral level of evolution in the Old Moon stage. Chameleons and anole suck in the color of their environment so quickly we can watch it happen. Imagine a human being during the Moon stage of evolution looking at a rosy sunset and the colors of the sunset appearing in various place of its body. To understand animals we must understand how they live in their astral body and react to our astral body's reactions when we are around them. A horse does not see us the way we see a horse. We appear to them as shadowy ghosts or angels. To be an equestrian to ride as if a Guardian Angel upon a horse, and if our astral body is pleasant to the horse, it will consider itself privileged to carry us and to go wherever we direct it. One can only understand the bond between horses, dogs, and other pets and humans if we understand the astral nature of that bond. (Page 68, 69)

[page 69, 70] Yet during Earth evolution man had to lose this state of living with his body within the flowing sea of color, so that he might develop, in his Ego, his own world outlook. In his constitution he had to become neutral with respect to this flowing sea of color. . . . Human beings must find the way to spiritualize the astral body again and permeate it with Ego activity. And in doing so we must find the moving waves of color again out of which we emerged for the sake of developing our Ego, and look about us and take stock of our surroundings as a swimmer would do when he steps ashore. . . . We must bring to life what is in the color, not by practicing color symbolism, which is the worst thing, but by actually discovering what is in color, in the same way as the power of laughter is in someone who laughs.

What does it mean to ask, "What does it mean?" We would need a *litany of epistemology* to answer that recursive question. Too many scientists have been asking such questions for centuries since the 1400s and their questions and answers have kept us from seeing the nose in front of our face, that is, "what lives in the forms and colors is the living organ of the spiritual world".

[page 74, 75] Bridges must be built between what are still abstract ideas of spiritual science and what flows from our hands, our chisel or our brush. Our civilization and culture, which is abstract and for the most part superficial, is a hindrance at the moment to the creation of such bridges, and prevents creations from coming alive. This explains the unfounded belief that spiritual knowledge could be the death of art. It has certainly killed many a thing in a number of people, like the inclination to make allegories and symbols, and to keep asking 'What is the meaning of this, and what is the meaning of that?' I have already stressed that one should not keep asking what things mean. Just as there is no sense in asking what the 'meaning' of the larynx is, for it is the living organ of speech, similarly we must learn to see that what lives in the forms and colors is the living organ of the spiritual world.

Here is my poem inspired by Steiner's words above:

An Epistemological Litany

What does it mean?

What does it mean to ask a question?

What does it mean to answer a question?

What does it mean to be sure about one's answer?

What does it mean to be unsure about one's answer?

What does it mean to say I understand your meaning?

What does it mean to say I don't understand your meaning?

What does it mean to ask, "What does it mean?"

Steiner realizes that the empty forms and questions of material science can infuse spiritual science if we allow ourselves to be misled into abstract logic and hollow words that are used to interpret ancient myths;

that will surely happen unless we learn to focus on what lives in the forms and colors in the world around us.

[page 75] Until we have thoroughly overcome the habit of inquiring in terms of symbols and allegories and of interpreting myths and legends allegorically and symbolically, and start sensing the breath of the spirit that weaves throughout the cosmos and feel its life in the figures of myths and fairy tales — until we do this we shall not have attained real spiritual knowledge.

Yet we have to make a start! It will be imperfect; and no one should think that we mistake mere beginnings for perfection, but the objection people are making about our spiritual movement at present is just as silly as previous objections, namely, that what we are trying to carry out with our Goetheanum building has no connection with our spiritual movement.

Having spent a week in the Goetheanum at a conference during which we used our hands, our bodies, our voices to create sculptures, dance in eurythmic elegance, and sing together in spiritual presence, I can testify that those buildings are vibrant, living spiritual realities today, nearly a century later. One's mere presence in the buildings is argument enough to still any counter argument or objections(4).

[page 76, 77] We know the reasons for their argument as well as they do. That we could pretend there is a connection between all that twaddle about 'higher ego' and all that raving about 'deification of the human soul' and the external forms is no news to us. And we know too, of course, that the study of spiritual science on a conceptual level can be done anywhere. But we feel that over and above the intellectual cultivation of spiritual science, when spiritual science enters livingly into human souls, it requires a different setting from the kind our dying civilization can offer. And we certainly do not need the outside world to tell us the platitude that spiritual science can be studied intellectually in any rooms other than those which have come alive with our forms. We must take the real ideal of spiritual science more seriously and ever more seriously.

Steiner relates a remarkable story about a famous lawyer who fainted when he realized that he had lost the suit and would be financially ruined. No one in the courtroom knew the reason for the fainting, but the man was later forced to go to America to escape his debts and the rest of his life he lived in severely reduced circumstances. Such short breaks in consciousness allow spiritual forces to enter a person, even though those around the person will mostly be unaware of the significance of the fainting spell.

[page 92, 93] During short breaks in consciousness all kinds of other spirituality can enter the human soul. And in that moment he received forces capable of restoring his impulse to go forward into the next incarnation. . . . I wanted to show you that man's conscious life is linked with an ongoing process in the unconscious, and that in man's conscious life there are really points where the consciousness is suppressed so that something can enter out of unconsciousness. . . . Yet a tremendous amount of spiritual life forces can stream into the human being at such moments, both good and bad, and capable of good and evil.

Spirit can shine through matter and reach into our unconsciousness, if our consciousness will get out of the way. This theme inspired me to write the following poem based on the material on page 93.

*What's the Matter with Spirit?
Nothing. It shines through Matter.
What's the matter with Matter?
What's the matter with Materialism?
No Spirit shines through it.
Afraid of his own shadow,*

*the Materialist dons blinders
and trots through the City
While Spirit shines through the City
and the Materialist misses it completely.*

*What's the matter with Spirit?
And
What's the City with Spirit?
A Shining City on a Hill.*

Is there hope for the Materialists which make up the majority of us humans today? Steiner speaks personally to each of us, telling us a big YES!

[page 93] You will gradually reach the point of becoming so perceptive for living links that you will recognize the moments in which the spirit comes near to each human being. In the future the world will no longer be explained so unequivocally as it is now, on the basis of material causes, but matter will be relegated to its rightful place. And at the same time people will realize that the material phenomenon is not the only thing, for spirit shines through it.

Our brain has cavities, did you know that? It consists of matter obviously because that is what we see when a human brain is pulled from a corpse and held up to us or placed in a specimen jar, only matter. But inside a living brain, in situ, there are ventricles, fluid-filled cavities, which fill the interior of the brain. Materialist scientists pay little attention to these ventricles, other than giving them scientific names; they consider them as worthless as the spleen, a spiritual organ whose meaning is ignored by doctors because humans seem to get along well if their spleen is removed(5). My supposition is that the ventricles of the brain which reach across the interior of the brain are fluid receptors of spiritual realities too delicate to be received by coarse matter itself. All imaginations, inspirations and intuitions flow through the coarse pink matter of the brain as if it didn't exist and resonate with the fluid in the ventricles and from which, they can be received as idea-filled images and thoughts by the brain. The ventricle-fluid thus acts as a galena crystal does in a crystal radio: it traps the electromagnetic waves which would else pass unimpeded through the copper wires and converts it into a pulsating current which can power an earphone.

[page 93, 94] . . . there are also windows through which, if we remain in the physical-material world, the spirit can descend to us.

If we do not perceive the fact that spirit descends to us through such windows, it is like someone opening a beautiful book who cannot read. . . . A person who cannot read world phenomena is like a cosmic illiterate where these phenomena are concerned. A person who can read, however, reads the ongoing process of the spiritual world in them. it is characteristic of the present materialistic age that materialism has made people illiterate with regard to the cosmos, almost a hundred-percent so. At a time when people are so proud of having reduced the percentage of illiteracy in civilized countries to such a great extent, they are enthusiastically heading towards illiteracy where the cosmos is concerned.

Ancient people were less literate than modern people but their native clairvoyance allowed them to see spiritual realities, which few literate people today can see. With civilization came our loss of this ability to see spiritual realities, loss of our ability to see the inside of things; it was replaced by our focus on the exterior of things, *the things which matter*, we say proudly, showing off, as it were, our cosmic illiteracy as if it were something to be proud of! We are, each and every one of us, cosmic illiterates at some level, and if we wish to become cosmic literates, we must learn first the alphabet, the very basics of spiritual science, and only then can we begin to make out a few words, and soon the world itself will begin to speak to us of its spiritual roots and realities flowing lively inside of those *things which matter*, and

gradually we will come to realize the spiritual forces which also matter, very much, and of which we have so abysmally ignorant, up until now.

[page 101] If you delve into the nature of the will you discover the true nature of matter. Present-day philosophers of nature are merely imagining things when they say that matter consists of molecules and atoms. you find the true nature of matter when you enter into yourself mystically. There you find the other side of will, which is matter. And in matter — that is, in will — you discover basically a world that is constantly in a state of germinating and beginning.

Surely, you may be thinking, we know more about matter than in Steiner's day, we know about quarks, mesons, pions, bosons, etc, today. But these are clearly only names for the cosmic forces our delicate instruments reveal to confirm or correct our abstract logical Quantum Mechanical theories and equations; these are not reality but nebulous shadows that the flowing spiritual world casts upon our instruments. (6) Everywhere we look in the material world, we see only the past, never the living flowing present. The world happens before we know it, because signals must travel to us before we can receive them, sense them, and undergo the processes of thinking by which we can come to say, "We know." We look up to the starry realms at night and all the light we see comes from worlds from which the light left thousands and millions of years ago. We live in a world of the past.

[page 101] You look out into the world and there you are surrounded by light. In this light a past world is dying away. You tread on hard matter, and the world's strength bears you up. Beauty shines forth as thought in the light. In the shining of beauty the world of the past dies away. The world rises in its strength and its power but also in its darkness. The future world rises in darkness, in the element of matter and will.

If a time came when physicists were to take the truth seriously, they would give up speculating about atoms and molecules and would say 'The outer world consists of the past, and what is inside this does not consist of molecules and atoms but the future.' And if people were ever to say things like, 'The past shines visibly into the present, and concealed in the past is the future,' they would be speaking correctly; for wherever we look, the present is always a combination of the activity of past and future. The future actually lies in the strength of matter. The past radiates in the beauty of light, light having the meaning of revelation of any kind — for what we mean by light in this context also appears in sound and in warmth, of course.

We have wandered through these lectures about color and you may be wondering how we have gone so far astray in our understanding of color, up until now. A brief look at a passage from Steiner's [Light Course](#) may help.

[page 57, [Light Course](#)] Your difficulty lies in the fact that you are always hankering after a phoronomical treatment of light and color. The strange education we are made to undergo instills this mental habit. Thinking of outer Nature, people will restrict themselves to thoughts of a more or less phoronomical character. They will restrict their thoughts to what is arithmetical, spatially formal, and kinematical.

Note: *phoronomy* refers to the Kantian concept of motion deducible from *a priori* conceptions. Having learned this way of thinking about motion, we expect a similar treatment of light and color. It is the box in which we have been thought to think and we need a special effort of will to think outside of that box. There is more to light and color than can be described using the arithmetical, spatial, or kinematical concepts we have become inured to by long training. Taken together these two lecture series, The Light Course and Colour, will enable you to counteract the lifetime of training to understand the world only from a materialistic point of view and will point you to living spiritual forces which have flowed through your life mostly unimpeded and unnoticed, up until now.

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----- *Footnotes* -----

Footnote 1.

We can see the reason that such scientists berate Steiner for his "mysticism and metaphysical fantasies" — it is exactly what they are doing out of their own awareness, up until now. Psychologists call this process *projection*.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 1.](#)

Footnote 2.

See my review of Nicholas Humphrey's book, [Seeing Red — A Study in Consciousness](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 2.](#)

Footnote 3.

See his novel, [The Woman Who Died A Lot](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)

Footnote 4.

You can read a report of my stay at the Goetheanum in this [DIGESTWORLD Issue](#) and see the red [Mi-cha-el Rose Window](#) with the spirit shining through it which graces the western wall of the main building.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)

Footnote 5.

Rightly understood the spleen is a vital control center for the body's processes, but if removed, an etheric spleen remains behind, so materialistic doctors downplay its importance, being concerned only with things that *matter*, like the so-called grey matter of the brain, which is actually pink, only turning grey after death.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)

Footnote 6.

See my review of [Quantum Enigma — Physics Encounters Consciousness](#) for more details.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 6.](#)

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