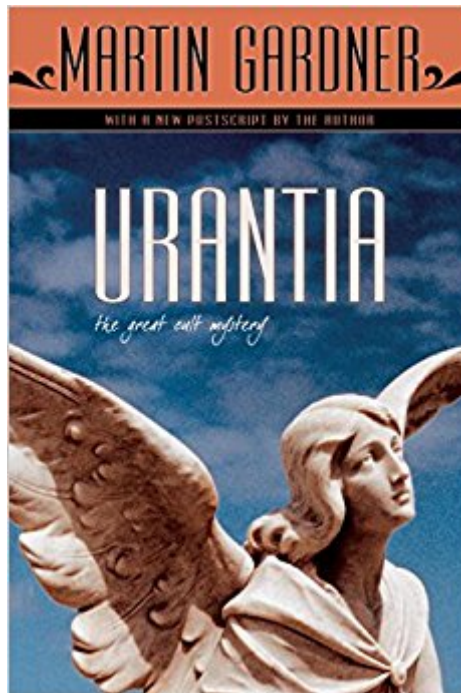




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Urantia: The Great Cult Mystery



Synopsis

Well-known skeptic and acclaimed popular science writer Martin Gardner presents a complete history of the Urantia movement, from its beginnings in the early 20th century to the present day. In addition to providing an outline of the Urantia cult's worldview, Gardner presents strong evidence to establish the identity of the man whose trancelike orations formed the basis of the book. Gardner also analyzes the flaws in Urantian science and points out many instances of plagiarism in various sections of the book. In a new postscript to this paperback edition, Gardner details recent developments in the Urantia movement, corrects some errors in the original edition, and responds to critical reactions from Urantia believers to his skeptical perspective on the book and the movement. Although there are other histories of The Urantia Book, this is the only one written by a skeptic. Anyone interested in the New Age, cults, or the development of new religions will find much fascinating material in Gardner's thorough overview.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The media has temporarily turned its large but constantly blinking eye away from cult-of-the-day reportage after the Waco conflagration, but such organizations continue to collect adherents. Martin Gardner, best known as mathematical-games-meister for Scientific American, turns his refreshingly unblinking gaze on the origin and continuing growth of the Urantian cult. It is a marvellous study of the ways in which ideas can be propagated through society. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

First published in 1955, the Urantia Book, a 2097-page tome hailed by its advocates as the channeled wisdom of celestial beings, posits one infinite God, the great I AM, and billions of lesser gods. It contains pronouncements on evolution, cosmology, physics and quantum mechanics, which Gardner (The New Age: Notes of a Fringe Watcher) finds deeply flawed, and it includes a biography of Jesus that asserts he toured Rome and Greece at ages 28 and 29, becoming an adept of Greek philosophy, mathematics and art. The Urantia cult was founded by two former Seventh-day Adventists?Chicago psychiatrist William Sadler (1875-1969) and his brother-in-law, Wilfred Kellogg (1876-1956), a businessman. In this intriguing expose, Gardner, former Scientific American mathematics columnist, makes a strong case that the Urantia Book is filled with plagiarized passages from other cult books. He also charts bitter schisms among the Urantians and looks at other Adventist splinter groups, notably David Koresh's Branch Davidian cult consumed by flames near Waco, Tex. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Wish, Gardner had used more stuff from Dr. (I. J.) Matrix

***WHAT A HOAX!

Having stumbled across the long and arcane Urantia Book at college, I was interested to read Gardner's skeptical take on the history of this rather obscure document. He does a good job in summarizing the somewhat bizarre Urantian cosmology and reveals the mindset of it's all too human authors, who came out of the Seventh Day Adventists religion. Doctor Sadler was an intelligent, well read man but his ideas on topics like health (esp sex and eugenics), politics and science seem eccentric to modern readers. Gardner makes a compelling case for Urantia being a continuation of the religious duplicity that caused Dr Sadler to lose faith in Ellen White, the Adventist prophet. The origins of a religion like Urantia is a familiar story to anyone who has studied new religious movements, and speaks volumes about our need to believe. The 1930's era scientific errors and rampant plagiarism that undermine the Urantia books alleged supernatural origin support Gardner's conclusion. In a postscript to the second edition published in 2008, Gardner reviews the chaos in the Urantia movement in recent years as different factions have formed around new channeled messages. True believers will likely find this book offensive as a result, in much the same way that Walter Rea's "The White Lie" caused chaos in the SDA twenty years ago when he

revealed the full extent of White's plagiarism in her prophecies. In contrast with other reviewers, I didn't find Gardner to be too acerbic, although clearly he isn't afraid to slaughter some sacred cows. The organization of the book isn't ideal and a good editor could have trimmed down some of the excess material that comes from Gardner's fascination with mathematical puzzles. Chapters on people in Sadler's sphere like the famous Dr Kellog are revealing but deserve a book of their own. Time has proven that Urantia can be grouped with other 'inspired' documents of the early and mid twentieth century like the Oahspe bible, Ruth and Ernest Norman's Unarius Academy (see When Prophecy Never Fails: Myth and Reality in a Flying-Saucer Group) and the Aetherius Society, and follows in the footsteps of earlier prophets like Swedenborg. The explosion of New Age channeling has rendered this genre commonplace in recent years, stealing some of the Urantia book's unique glamor, but it remains a testament to Dr Sadler's ingenuity. Prophets keep coming up with this stuff, and believers keep believing it.

Completely blows the Urantia Book.

Many postings point out that the Ubook has been plagiarised. It has, but as the Ubook admits this, not with citations, a citation would be overcomplimentary. The work is many levels above the original source authors, or "those that have pieces of the truth (during 1955 and earlier) in the time of the writing of the Ubook" "We may resort to pure revelation only when the concept of presentation has had no adequate previous expression by the human mind." There are perhaps thousands of human source authors, there are no Ubook readers that doubt this, but if you would take the time to view the concepts that believed to be plagiarised you might come away believing as I do that it is akin to turning a Ford Model T into a modern Cadillac Eldorado. They both roll, use engines to propel but one is an advanced art form while the other remains mere transportation. The Ubook is a book written with beautiful precise advanced concepts written concisely.

For those who are seeking truth, Martin Gardner has done us a great service. He covers the history of those people who brought us the Urantia book. He makes a convincing case that this giant tome was conceived in deception. For those who believe that the Bible is true, will perceive that this possible channeled fantasy contradicts the Bible. For those who don't believe the Bible, they need to know that the creators of the Urantia book sprung forth or evolved from the Seventh day Adventist Church. A denomination with a false prophet and a history full of fanaticism. I highly recommend Martin Gardner's book, for anyone who has looked at the Urantia book or thinking of

buying that ultimate grand cosmic fantasy.

While looking for some alternative to a lot of confusing biblical jargon I got into the Urantia Book and found it to be EUGENICS and NAZISM in DISGUISE! I was thoroughly refreshed to find out that others were intelligent enough not to be bling faith sheep and believe that pack of fabrications. Though many of the stories in the Urantia book are partially true, The Great Cult Mystery points out how they were twisted to fill the agendas of Nazi supporters like William Kellogg, Charles Russell (of the infamous Jehovah's Witnesses, and Bill Sanders (one of the writers of the Urantia Book) into "cleansing the human race" through preferred breeding and ethnic cleansing. For all you people that believe the Urantia Book, I suggest you read the history of its creators first before you believe the so-called sleeping brother in law subject's view on the universe.

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