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Interiority and Objectivity with Starseeds on the Pale Blue Dot

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of**

**Master of Arts
in
Social Anthropology**

**at Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand**

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2018

ABSTRACT:

This thesis examines a new religious movement of people who call themselves Starseeds. I examine Starseed beliefs in light of the postmillennium and our current digitised world, as well as demonstrate a correlation between the Starseed worldview and current societal norms, ideas and the social imaginary. The formulation of the Starseed worldview seems to be highly responsive to exterior social factors, be it political, environmental, or economic, whilst also maintaining a historicity and religionism that can be traced through to the traditions and beliefs of older, more established religious groups. Additionally, my research into Starseeds recognises that the spiritual quest for theosis and enchantment is still ever-present in today's secularised age. Underlying the themes of this thesis is the age-old philosophical debate around object versus subject, and I present some current arguments that exemplify the progression of quantum understandings into previously determinist, materialist disciplines such as physics and maths. Furthermore, I propose that the Starseeds' beliefs in shifting realities, multi-dimensions, and noumenal subjectivity correspond with premises of quantum mechanics, and posit that this is a trend not limited to Starseeds, but rather an indication of a shift in the way the sciences and social sciences are currently reconfiguring their frameworks and understandings. Starseed beliefs in aliens and being star-born souls necessitated a discussion about the anthropological and theoretical decentering of the human in two main spheres: the Anthropocene; based around the premise that we are earthbound Beings, subject and vulnerable to the simple requirements of the body, including clean water and air; and amazing discoveries in astrosience including the salty brine on one of Jupiter's moons which may be an indicator of life as well as possibly habitable exo-planets. These developments have garnered a growing realisation that our anthropogenic and geocentric worldview as humans on Earth may, in future, face challenges to long-held assumptions.

Acknowledgements:

I often comment that doing graduate studies and writing a thesis is like going on a long hiking trek, with everything on your back, a tent, good shoes, drink bottles, and a map where you've plotted your journey with a general if incomplete idea of where you are venturing. When one first sets out there is excitement and a feeling of "I'm so awesome, lucky and brave!" and those early weeks, meeting and discussing things with your fellow travellers and classmates is energising! Gradually as the days pass, writing your thesis becomes a solo endeavour, and you reach small peaks, take in the views, enjoy the sunsets, and revel in those moments when you find a beautiful creek to wade through in an amazing article that fits exactly what you are trying to articulate. But along the way some of us travellers end up in swamps, bogged down with uncertainty, heavy with the weight of all that work not yet synthesised into a coherent document, and seeing that mountain peak looming still, seemingly miles away. I was at this stage when I reached out to Professor Jeff Sluka whose thorough, in-depth responses to my drafts felt like I had arrived at a cosy hut with all amenities, to rest up, take stock and tend to my bruises. I want to thank him wholeheartedly for instilling in me a renewed confidence in the direction I was heading, and for the occasional wry comment that made me laugh. I also wish to thank my Starseed participants for letting me into their space and giving me a new and wider perspective on what comprises reality and belief. I also would like to thank my fellow classmates for their support and friendship, as well as Professor Kathryn Rountree for our delightful Skype discussions which helped me better understand the terrain I was entering into.

Cartoon: So, What's the Problem?

Doctor: So what's the problem?

Patient: Well, my ears are ringing, I'm seeing kaleidoscopic geometry when I close my eyes, and I'm communicating with aliens in my sleep!

Doctor: Oh, that's no worry. You're just ascending into 5D and your third eye is opening. We see it all the time! Let me prescribe you these spirulina tablets to help your body adjust to all the cosmic upgrades.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Interiority and Objectivity with Starseeds On the Pale Blue Dot

*Be humble for you are made of earth,
Be noble for you are made of stars.*
Serbian proverb.

Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there - on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam (Sagan 1994:8).¹

This thesis presents an ethnographic study of people who self-identify as 'Starseeds'. Starseeds, Crystal Children, Starchildren, Wayshowers, and Lightworkers are just a few of the names that my respondents assign to themselves, but for the purpose of this thesis I will use the term Starseeds because this is the one they most commonly use to describe themselves. Starseeds are people who believe in two unique and defining features; a) their souls originate from other star systems and are not from earth, and b) they are here at this time to help the Earth and all its inhabitants ascend from the mundane 3rd dimensional reality into a 'higher vibrational' and 'authentic' reality of the 5th dimension. In this introduction, I will identify my topic and approach; briefly explain my analytical concepts of "vertical time" and "Being"; describe how I came to my topic and my research aims and methods; introduce my research participants and how I engaged with them; and provide an outline of the structure of my chapters.

A Vertical Moment in Vertical Time:

I first encountered Maurice Merleau-Ponty's term 'vertical time' in a chapter by Clara Han from the book *The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage Philosophy* (2012). She describes vertical

¹ <https://www.sapiens.org/column/wanderers/anthropologists-in-outer-space/>.

time as “co-occurring or contemporaneous acts, moments, and circumstances” or like “a drop of stream water carrying layers of dirt and organisms” (2012:76), through which we understand that Merleau-Ponty’s concept defines any single moment as a multi-layered, complex moment carrying the past, the present, and seeds of the future, as well as constructions of self and self-identifications, thoughts, fleeting or constant, emotional and spiritual states of being, and too, the ‘outside world’; the socio-political environment, current affairs, media and the life that we live. I employ the term ‘vertical moment’ based on Merleau-Ponty’s vertical time to open the chapters in this thesis as a narrative device to capture a slice of time that encompasses my interiority, impressions and sensations as well as the exterior world around, be it socio-political events or particular items of interest, as I traverse through Starseed versions of reality and this thesis. The terms ‘vertical time’ or ‘vertical moment’ are not to be confused with a similar Buddhist concept of ‘vertical time’ occasionally employed in religious studies to denote a timelessness, or non-existence of time.²

A Brief Definition of Being as Used in This Thesis:

In this thesis, I apply Heidegger’s definition of ‘Being,’ which is differentiated from ‘being’ by virtue of a phenomenologically engaged and active self-awareness that recognises that a person’s Being is not the same as the being of a chair, a tree, or another person. According to Heidegger, “ontology is the science of Being. But Being is always the being of a being. Being is essentially different from a being, from beings ... We call it the *ontological difference* - the differentiation between Being and beings” (1982:17, original emphasis). Heidegger’s *Dasein* or ‘Being-in-the-World’ emphasises the phenomenological interrelationship between the Self and surroundings, and recognises that we are not isolated entities, but rather are in constant, ever-changing, engaged communion with our surroundings. Whilst I see everyone as ‘Being’, this conceptualisation applies particularly well to Starseeds, who see themselves as being in a continuous interrelationship with their world(s). Occasionally I use the term ‘beingness’ to indicate Being differentiated from being, and to ensure there is no ambiguity in understanding that the phenomena under discussion is the ontological Being of the Starseed.

A Vertical Moment:

At this moment, celestial bodies plot a course across the skies. Stars and planets, supernovas and black holes, some visible, and many more hidden from the human eye traverse ancient routes, bound to inextricable forces that pull and swing in a great dance across the heavens. On Earth, July 2016, as I write this opening paragraph, the United States is suffering the political stresses of the newly nominated presidential candidate Donald Trump’s uncensored ramblings; recent police shootings of yet more innocent black civilians mar the social field and spark the emergence of #BlackLivesMatter;

² See for example: <http://alternativeculture.com/spirit/vertical.htm>.

and there are fresh terrorist bombings in Turkey, Belgium, Egypt, and France. A political polemic - left versus right - has grown wider, and normally liberal countries in Europe are veering to the political right, due in part to the angst and worry about the influx of millions of Syrian refugees, the preservation of their 'imagined communities', their national identity, quality of life, the economy, and jobs. Borders open and close, armed guards prevent refugees from entering Hungary, and Angela Merkel, Germany's Chancellor faces opposition from inside her coalition party for her open-door refugee policy. Analysts describe the Brexit vote to leave the EU as an indicator that the people are dissatisfied, and that globalisation has not benefited the 'common man'; post-Brexit, the British pound falls and rises again. Closer to home, China's claims on the South China Sea adds to the turmoil of the times we are living in. In Australia, the Great Barrier Reef is dying from coral bleaching due to warming seas and climate change, and environmentalists battle the opening of the Adani coal mine. Farmers place 'Shut the Gate' signs on their fences to prevent fracking for coal-seam gas on their lands. In a scene replayed all over the world, corporate ventures make escalating profits, and one percent of the world's population hold the majority of wealth, whilst the remaining 99% struggle with mortgages, the challenges of feeding and housing themselves and their families and in many cases acquiring even the basic necessities for survival. An article in *The Guardian* argues that neoliberalism is dying, and Neo Bluestar, my Starseed friend posts a call on *Facebook* for Ubuntu, a money-less system.

My Introduction to Starseeds:

Sitting on the carpet in a small converted shed in the rainforest in Kuranda, Far North Queensland, surrounded by my friend Petra's (a pseudonym) numerous crystals and dreamcatchers that she was weaving, a Himalayan salt lamp glowing softly in the corner, I listened intently to her revelations. "Tanya, it's been so amazing! I've learnt so much and I feel as if I've finally found *it*. You know me, I've always been interested in energy, and when I found this course, I had to apply even though it's expensive. I really channelled my energy into getting the money together, and get this, my application was late, but she wrote back and said that it was ok! And the stuff in this course! Do you know about the *Akashic* records? This is where all our information is stored, our blueprints, our lives past and present, and now I know how to access these and help people get rid of their shit! This is what I am here for Tanya!"

Petra lit a sage stick and walked around 'clearing' the room of negative energies, blowing the sweet incense over me and herself, and then she put me on her massage table. Placing her hands on me she began to speak an invocation that she read from her notes, "I call upon the archangels, angels, light workers, ascended masters, Tanya's higher self and Source to surround us with golden light and violet light-fire. Allow no entities, demons, negative forces, to be in our space". I felt a stab of fear, lately I had felt haunted by 'something' indefinable, it was only small but nagging. "Where should I

begin work?” Petra jolted as she received *answers* - “The head, the torso, the heart? Aah, the heart. Is it past lives? Aah, it’s past lives. One life ago? Two lives ago? Three lives ago? Four lives ago? Aah, five lives, five lives ago”.

As I lay with my eyes closed, I became serene, meditative, suspended in a timeless place. Petra worked on me for an hour or so. She spoke out loud, and although I didn’t know exactly what it meant, I heard her clearing paths in me right down to the DNA level of rhizomes, mitochondria and RNA. She found out that I was a nun in a past life and had taken a vow of poverty, and she helped me resolve that vow so that I was no longer bound by it. She cleared a negative entity that was in my sphere, and she discovered that one of my guides was from the 14th dimension.

When we sat down later with our cuppas, Petra talked passionately about finding out that she was a ‘blueprint deliverer’ and that she was here to help people face their issues and release any negative patterns so they’d be ready to transition from the 3rd to the 5th dimension. Whilst I had heard about and read articles on this subject before, this was my first real introduction to a group of people that I nicknamed for myself ‘Cosmics’, and who are now the subject of my thesis. Since then, through my friend’s ventures into this area, involvement in a private *Facebook* group that she established, and reading a wide range of Starseed blog posts, I have gained an awareness of the prevailing themes and issues that Starseeds are concerned with.

Research Aims:

From the outset, I was interested in understanding the Starseeds and mapping their worldview. I became intrigued by certain questions that were raised as I learned more about them, such as:

- How did they *know* they were Starseeds, and what did that knowing feel like? Where is this knowing located, if anywhere? Linked to this are the questions; what is the Ascension and the 5th dimension?
- Were Starseeds representative of a technologized age, digitisation, and current social, political, and economic realities? Is there a relationship between popular culture, science fiction, scientific advancements, space travel, the internet and the formation of the Starseed worldview?

These core questions emerge from and delineate two different perspectives. The first attempts to understand the subjectivity or interiority of my respondents, whilst the second seeks answers for the emergence of Starseeds as a result of social and external influences. The dynamic tension between simultaneously positing a view from both the outer and the inner, the objective observer and subjective participant, placed me in a constant balancing act between being an immersed Starseed participant and my role as a social scientist. Falling into the Starseed belief system and understanding their interiority required a complete shift in perception and I would lean into that ‘space’ for a while.

I would say that at certain points I became ‘in tune’ with Starseed assessments of what they called ‘energies’, only to return to what the Starseeds would describe as 3rd dimensional reality, and my own worldview.

This experience of dipping in and out of perceptual realities, for me, is a very prevalent practice for many people living in current times. I would argue that with the increasing immersion in screens and ‘mirrored’ realities via digitisation, that new modes of understanding and defining ‘reality’ are required. In terms of my research aims, I found myself asking a third question:

- What, if anything, does the Starseeds’ worldview indicate for the social scientist about spiritual beliefs in the modern digitised, posthuman, postmillennial age?

It seemed to me as I came to understand what Starseeds meant by shifts in dimensionalities, that there was a similarity between their ability to conceptualise different perceptual realities and the mirrored realities of modern media and digital worlds. The similarity lay in the ability to transpose one’s awareness beyond the mundanities of the body. The postmillennium is bringing with it new ontological definitions and the line between objective assessments of reality versus a subjective interpretation of reality are becoming indistinct and mutable. I found that this core philosophical conundrum underpinned many of my research themes, and reflecting on the aforementioned interior-exterior binary, I became intrigued about the effect of the digital age upon the worldview of my respondents, and the social field more generally.

The Research Area - Informing the Field:

This thesis can be considered as a form of ‘virtual ethnography’ (Hine 2000, Boellstorff et al 2012) or ‘netnography’ (Kozinets 2009). My primary mode of communication with most of my research respondents was the internet, which fit well into the broader research themes of this thesis. This research fits into a number of categories, one being New Religious Movements (NRMS), but also themes from posthumanism (Smart & Smart 2017) and digital anthropology (Horst & Miller 2012, Pink et al. 2015, Underberg & Zorn 2014) provide a component of the analysis. From my explorations into these areas, digital anthropology focusses on “general digital applications that bind people into social collectives” (Pollinger³) and also has wide applications across many themes such as digital natives (the demographic for whom the internet was never new), authenticity, perspectives of a global village, information capitalism and questions of identity.

The internet was my primary place of fieldwork and as such, forms the backdrop of the results and data that I gathered. The internet as a field presents an idiosyncratic paradox for the ethnographer, as it is both a place that affects and influences its participants as well as a non-place without corporeal structures and objects. I aim to understand my field - the internet - as a social

³ digitalanthropologist.blogspot.com.au.

environment, a location, with its own idiosyncratic language, modes of communication and ways of relating and behaviour. Yet, additional to this, the internet being a 'non-place', brings a particular quality to my research that more traditional field places do not have. Where does the internet exist as a region if not in the mind? I explore the internet and the digital realm as it is applicable to Starseeds who demarcate the internet as a part of the 3D 'Matrix', yet contradictorily see it as a means for community, communication and cohesion.

Further to this, the internet is an ideological category of Being that is being shaped by the increased digitisation of our world, not only via the internet but as a ubiquitous component of many facets of daily life, from digital calendars to the navigation systems in one's car. I found myself calling this immersive worldview 'digitalia' in an attempt to capture the way that digital devices, applications, and methods are becoming extensions of the human social body and field. Coining the term digitalia felt necessary to me, for the term 'cyberspace' or Appadurai's (1990) terms 'mediascapes' and 'technoscapes' whilst capturing global cultural flows reflected by technology and media, nonetheless imply a place to visit and then return to 'normality', a space that is not embedded within our present daily lives.

Additionally, because my primary mode of communication with my participants was through the internet, I decided that when I quoted them from their online posts, writings or even from my questionnaire (which was distributed via digitalia), that I would not change or correct any idiosyncrasies they had in their style of writing, for example, the use of dots, emojis and symbols as well as any misspellings. Without the direct interaction that is the usual process in ethnographic research projects, where one might grasp impressions from conversations and communications, I felt that these little things revealed at a subtle level small details about my respondents. Interaction through the online medium required that even something as inconsequential as a comma held weight and meaning, and therefore I have presented these quotes as they were provided to me, without [sic] and corrections. Such was the conviction of this position that when I attempted to edit out an overabundance of full-stops in one of my respondent's writing, it felt unethical to do so, as if I was rubbing out some of her personality. However, where I quote from an article found in an online resource such as *in5D.com* I have abided by conventions and included [sic] where necessary.

Whilst there is a lot of information that Starseeds use to explain how and where their beliefs and theories originate, links to Sumeria or Atlantis, and theories of Mesopotamian gold hunting, as well as copious blogs and videos disclaiming the 'truth' of certain events, such as NASA's moon landing, the 9.11 attack in New York, claims of US governmental suppression of knowledge of UFO landings and interactions, or that a reptilian alien race is in charge of world structures such as banks, the media and governments, I was uninterested in pursuing in-depth research along these lines. I refer to these

beliefs where necessary, or in context, but it was never my aim to prove nor disprove whether Starseed beliefs are valid and well-founded, indeed, if they are the 'truth'. Rather, my research seeks to understand Starseeds as they understand themselves, and to place Starseeds into context within a hermeneutical and societal framing and as a reflection of current modes of thinking and worldviews.

Who are the Starseeds?

As noted above, the main defining and core belief of the Starseed is that their soul originates not from Earth but from another planet or star system, and that they have incarnated here on earth at this present time to help facilitate the Ascension of Earth and all that belongs to Earth into the 5th dimension. I will explain these Starseed beliefs in more detail in the following chapters. Starseeds are unique in that they do not adopt the practice of being a Starseed, rather, they are *innately* Starseed although they might only realise or *awaken* to it later on in life. This is in contrast to how a Christian takes Christ into their lives, or a Baha'i makes a decision to become a Baha'i at age fifteen. Correlations can be drawn between New Age, esotericism and shamanic practices and beliefs, as Starseeds seem to have amalgamated many belief systems into their highly syncretic worldview. Some Starseeds believe that there are only a limited number of Starseeds in the world with their 'mission' encoded in their DNA, whilst other Starseeds say that everyone is a Starseed, it's just that not everyone has 'woken up'.

Distribution:

Through the process of my research, I have found that Starseeds come from all walks of life, socio-economic demographics, ethnicities and nationalities. In Petra's group for example, there were members from Turkey, New Zealand, Australia, the US, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, England and France. One member was a well-known soap actress and model in her country, and there was a botanist, a road worker for council, an architect, a disability carer, painters, musicians, photographers, and a graphic arts designer. The oldest was in her late sixties and the youngest a teenager. Through my questionnaire and posts on the *Starseeds.net Facebook* page, I primarily received responses from Americans, but also from Kenya, France, and Australia. Regarding the public proponents of Starseed posts that I have been following, Judith Kusel is South African, Tim Whild is English, Polona Somrak is Danish. *In5D.com* (an 'esoteric, metaphysical, and spiritual' database) is based in Florida, USA. *Starseeds.net* (the 'largest Starseeds community on-line') is also based in the US, whilst the *Facebook* site *Terra Nova - The New Earth* is based in New Zealand, indicating that Starseeds are found everywhere, but primarily Western countries.

In5D.com provided a good proportion of my data, and is the largest database in all things Starseed, receiving (according to their website) over 2 million hits per month, and their *Facebook* page has over (at the time of viewing) 409,000 followers. The *Starseeds.net Facebook* page has 8,808 followers,

typing the word Starseeds into Google offers almost two million results, and a YouTube search yields about 28,900 results. *Terra Nova - The New Earth Facebook* page has 31,516 followers, and Judith Kusel has 17,643 followers. Typing in the word 'ascension' into *Facebook* search offers up six relevant pages, and to give an example of the numbers of people accessing Starseed-related *Facebook* pages:

- Earth Sensitives Mastering Ascension: 10,085 members
- Sacred Ascension Key of Life Secrets of the Universe: 33,729 members
- Ascension Pioneers, Polona Somrak: 13,443 members
- Cosmic Intelligence Agency: 1,468,237 members
- Universe Explorers: 1,217,643 members

There were in fact so many websites, podcasts, and YouTube videos that it was necessary to choose a limited number to focus on for this thesis.

Research Methodology and Participants:

In order to map the Starseed worldview, I entered into their world through conversations and engagement, as well as reading numerous blogs, web postings, *Facebook* posts from Starseed sites and articles available on the internet. Additionally, I wrote directly to people whose websites I found, through articles on *in5D.com* and Google searches with particular search phrases. *In5D.com* writes, collates and publishes articles which are all related to subjects that Starseeds are interested in - such as the Ascension, energy protection, channelled messages from other star systems, or ascended light-beings (these will be described later in this thesis) - and holds events and seminars all over the world. I also devised a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) with a short introduction explaining my study aims which I posted on the *Starseeds.net Facebook* page.

In the early phases of my research, one of my supervisors (Professor Kathryn Rountree) recommended that I do a trial run-through to get a sense of the logistics for my research and to assess the probability of finding participants. I received responses from 12 participants via the *Starseed.net Facebook* page almost immediately although only six people actually returned the questionnaire to me completed. I will be referring to their answers where relevant in this thesis. Another *Starseed.net* respondent to the questionnaire had problems downloading it, so I chatted with him via *Facebook* phone. Relevant to the ethical process of conducting my research, I received 'low risk' ethics approval from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. I also asked all of my research participants what name they would like to be known by in this thesis and some chose pseudonyms while others were happy to be known by their real names.

Two friends that I made through Petra's group, Neo Bluestar and KT Soulsong, agreed to be participants and they helped me frame the Starseed worldview. I only know Neo online, and KT is a friend with whom I have somewhat regular contact, primarily via *Facebook*, but I have also met up with her in person when she's been in my area. There are also a few people that I know living in my

vicinity who self-identify as Starseed. I set up some interviews with them and posed key questions within a loosely structured interview format. It was enjoyable to have face-to-face and 'real' time interaction, as most of my research was conducted online. One of these was Lunar, a gentleman whom I have known for many years, and another that spoke with me about her views was Narelle Whitedove, an actively engaged Starseed with ongoing extraterrestrial encounters and experiences.

As Raymond Firth observes, "Different individuals in the same religious communion vary in their beliefs on a given topic" (1996:15) and Starseeds are no different. There are Starseeds who believe in their Starseed origins and have feelings and sensations they attribute to expansion of their consciousness, and there are those somewhat exceptional Starseeds who readily receive messages, visions or have extraordinary contact with alien or spiritual beings. I hoped particularly to make contact with a public Starseed proponent, for although Starseeds have no leadership structure, these individuals have access and insight into the higher dimensions and relay 'higher' messages to other Starseeds. Perusing the numerous websites and pages offering information, soul readings and healing services, I was able to establish contact with a key public proponent, Tim Whild. We wrote to each other via *Facebook* and I also had a Skype meeting with him for a few hours. I was happy to establish contact with Whild, a Starseed *wayshower* who is a regular communicator of significant signs and events for other Starseeds.

Additionally, Judith Kusel was of great interest to me as she has a strong following and often relays messages from 'higher sources'. She offers soul-readings (much like the ones my friend Petra developed for herself), clears past lives, and has published a number of books and posts online regularly. Her website states that:

Judith is a Pyramid Crystalline Grid Activator and Soul Empowerment Consultant. She is a remarkable and awe-inspiring woman, who has the ability to tap into the cosmic Super-consciousness Energy fields and to bring forth the Ancient Cosmic Knowledge and Technology to the people of planet Earth.⁴

In an impulsive moment, I decided to book a reading with her in April 2017, whereby I was required to provide her with my date and place of birth, any names that I had been known by, and any questions I might have. The reading I received was highly interesting in that many of the qualities she identified as belonging to me seemed quite accurate. I will be referring to some of her posts as they are very representative of the Starseed worldview. There are also numerous blog posts and websites that focus on darker concerns, and I refer to some 'negative' positions when I discuss the 3D Matrix.

In terms of data-keeping, I began a digital journal early on to jot some thoughts down, record my attempts at recruiting informants, and have a place to paste particular items of interest that I

⁴judithkusel.com.

wanted to return to. I have used excerpts from the questionnaire and transcripts of conversations and communications with my respondents especially when they spoke to relevant points. I hope by combining the information gleaned from *wayshower* Starseeds in the public eye, the Starseeds who replied to my questionnaires and posts on *Starseed.net*, *in5D.com* articles, as well as in-person discussions with Starseeds closer to home, that a representative picture will emerge of this new religious movement.

Locating my Theoretical Position:

Wouter Hanegraaff identifies one approach to studying NRMs as being an “illustration of sociological theories” (1998:3), which in part describes my own approach to my topic. Yet rather than treating Starseeds as “the wallpaper of the social system” (Beckford 1983:29), and searching for an overarching sociological or indeed anthropological theory to help define Starseeds, my search for interpretations is based around a quite broad definition of society as the surrounding environment within which we live presently - our physical, digital, social and political surroundings. The approach I have taken is to pursue an examination of the various aspects of the Starseed phenomenon through different theoretical lenses, where each part though individually treated is nonetheless recognisably a part of a whole. In this way, I seek to achieve what Husserl describes as “uniting relations” (1887:114) and provide a conceptual, multi-faceted understanding of the Starseeds’ worldview:

In order to note the uniting relations in such a whole, analysis is necessary. If, for example, we are dealing with the representational whole which we call 'a rose,' we get at its various parts successively, by means of analysis: the leaves, the stem ... Each part is thrown into relief by a distinct act of noticing, and is steadily held *together with* those parts already segregated (1887:114 emphasis in original).

Because the Starseed ontology occupies fluid borders across a range of beliefs and disciplines, it seemed to me that I needed to locate, describe and examine the multiple territories and parameters that the Starseed worldview occupies, which I hoped to achieve by honing in on some essential and unique aspects of their beliefs and truths. Guided by the Starseed epistemology - the inner reflecting the outer, the 3rd dimensional world versus 5th dimensional reality - my theoretical analysis is based upon the interrelationship between the Starseed definitions of 3rd dimensional and 5th dimensional realities. Pursuing an epistemic examination of Starseed beliefs and definitions of a 5th dimensional reality as well as their social (3rd dimensional) realities allowed for analysis to help determine how ‘social facts’ (Durkheim 1982:52) and exterior influences have contributed to the emergence of the Starseed phenomenon, and for me to pursue a reflexive and subjective understanding of the interiority of my respondent.

It is indeed this binary between interiority and exteriority, that plays an undertone beneath all my musings and writings, and provides an underlying theme threading and weaving through my text: The fine line that see-saws and balances between the poles of immanence and transcendence, knowing and un-knowingness, objectivity and subjectivity, interiority and exteriority, and mind versus body. By defining this binary, I do not mean to imply a distinct border that differentiates and categorises, but rather a 'doubling' effect, that is, the Starseeds' worldview of the inner reflecting the outer, the outer revealing the inner, bound in a complex interdependent co-existing relationship. Along the lines of anthropologist Tim Ingold's "mutually conditioning relations", I see Starseeds as "human becomings" (2011:9) and not standing "over and above the sheer materiality of nature" (2011:8), and as Being in the world in phenomenological, sentient awareness that is both of this world, in a material and physical sense, as well as dwelling within abstract worlds of consciousness, higher and multi-dimensions, and across the ever-emerging domain of digital realities. As Ingold observes, "the very concept of the 'human' seems to embody the abiding paradox of a form of life that can realise its own essence only by transcending it" (2011:8), and I would argue that by inhabiting the physical world in an embodied and consciously self-aware manner, Starseeds have found a way to both live in what we might call 'normal' reality as well as 'realising their own essence' and 'transcending it' in higher and abstract conscious realities.

While I maintain that Starseed beliefs are a correlative reflection or mirroring of exterior influences and social facts, I also realised that their relationships with their outer world(s) was more complex than the interiority/exteriority binary. Rather, theories around interrelationships and criss-crossing lines and ideations became increasingly relevant to understanding the complexity of the Starseeds' worldview. Somewhat akin to Latour's concept of "loops" that posits progressive and multi-layered "cognitive, emotional and aesthetic" (2013:94) loops of experiences and knowledge to comprise our Being in the world, I found that Starseeds dwell in what I call a "social soup" (adapted from Durkheim's social facts), thick with feelings, sensations, experiences; weighted with historicity, traditional and non-traditional religious ideologies; alive with political engagement, socio-environmental activism and media communications, and stimulated by scientific advances in astroscience and quantum theory. I would argue that a conceptual "social soup" is a fundamental feature of living in our postmillennial digitised age, and that the term alludes to the interconnectivity of the various aspects and social conditions that comprise our lives. Furthermore, the perceptual 'thickness' of the term 'soup' aligns well with the Starseed's phenomenological and sensorial engagement with their reality where all the 'ingredients' of their lives hold meaning and weighted symbology. Starseeds are "a totally new kind of geopolitical theology" (Latour 2013:96) responsive to and reflective of the contemporary times.

Structure of the Thesis:

In order to achieve these analytical goals, my chapters have been written from different viewpoints: Some from an interior point-of-view of the Starseed or as they see things themselves, and some through a more objective lens within broader societal themes and scholarly discourse. Chapter Two offers a brief review of relevant literature; Chapter Three provides an overview of Starseed beliefs; Chapter Four analyses the Starseed worldview in context of digital realities and societal themes; Chapter Five posits a theoretical ontology with regards to Starseeds in the postmillennium; and Chapter Six addresses my research questions and briefly examines recent theoretical developments in the sciences and social sciences that correlate with the Starseed worldview.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Academic and Social Fields Within Which Starseeds Reside

New religions are religious groups that exist socially and culturally on the fringe, differ significantly in belief and practice from the dominant religious institutions of the culture in which they are located, and have minimum ties to and allies within the dominant government, religious, and intellectual structures of the society in which they operate (Melton 2007:7).

A Vertical Moment:

It's weird, I've been consistently experiencing coincidences related to my research; links and relationships between ideas, Starseed epistemology, scientific articles, or a discussion on the radio, and people I bump into, with conversations that arise where that person says one little thing which leads me along to another thing that is highly relevant to my thesis. Starseeds say that coincidences or synchronicities are the norm when one is *awake* to the true nature of the world, that is, its immateriality and its composition of energy. If one 'puts out' the message, as I did in this case, 'I am looking for understanding of this subject', then energetically I create the 'space' to receive the answers I require. This experience I am sure is not all that unusual; when I became pregnant, it seemed I was seeing pregnant women everywhere, or when I met someone from Norway, suddenly Norway was popping up constantly. Reading Robert Lanza's theory of Biocentrism has been amazing, because it places phenomenological, noumenal consciousness at the centre of reality, though Lanza's theory is based on scientific principles. We have a much-lauded neuro-biologist listed in 2014 *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people⁵ and Starseeds telling the same story - that "[t]he external world and consciousness are correlative" (Lanza 2009:19).

Additionally, a conversation from *The Science Show*⁶ on Radio National with mathematician Margaret Wertheim furthers this perspective and reveals an ideological shift in the way science is viewing the world, which again, aligns with how Starseeds claim the world to be. Starseeds are fond of saying 'As above so below; As within so without', and the outer world at present is demonstrably reflecting the inner world (or is it vice versa?) of my subjects in very interesting ways.

Margaret Wertheim: *I have become obsessed, Robyn, with the question of what does it mean that we discover mathematical structures in the world around us? And one lovely example of this is mathematicians spend hundreds of years trying to prove that what we now understand*

⁵ robertlanza.com.

⁶ www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/maths-is-all-around-us.

as what's called hyperbolic geometry, trying to prove that was impossible and finally in the 19th century they understood that it is mathematically possible and they thought it had no representation in the real world. And then it turns out that sea slugs and corals have been doing this for hundreds of millions of years. So, I want to ask the question; does a sea slug know hyperbolic geometry? And I believe that in some sense we have to answer yes. A sea slug may not be able to write down the equations, but it's literally enacting this non-Euclidean geometry in the structures of its being. And so, I want to make the claim that things in nature that are doing mathematics, like sea slugs and sound waves and electrons, they are mathematicians by performance.

Robyn Williams: *And spiders doing webs.*

Margaret Wertheim: *And spiders doing webs and any sort of a critter that's enacting a mathematical structure. Here's a beautiful example. So, when a peregrine falcon spirals through the air towards its prey, it enacts a perfect logarithmic spiral. So, Euler's famous equation for the logarithmic spiral is here enacted by a bird. Does the bird know mathematics? I want to say yes it does.*

Overview of This Chapter:

My research into Starseeds is situated within the New Religious Movements (NRM) category as well as the new and growing discipline of xenoanthropology or the anthropology of aliens. In this chapter, I briefly discuss popular Starseed-related books written by practitioners, provide academic background through scholarly considerations of NRM and New Age spiritual or religious beliefs and practices as they relate to Starseeds, and examine xenoanthropological discussions related to my subject.

A significant cornerstone in my study of Starseeds is recognising the integral relationship that Starseeds have with their 'outer world', or social field, which I defined as a social soup in my introduction, based on Durkheim's concept of social facts. In my view, Starseeds *represent* and are *represented* by a relationship with and to the social soup that is intersubjective and responsive. An important component of the social soup within which Starseeds reside is cultural beliefs and ideas regarding the existence of extraterrestrial (ET) aliens. As the Starseed worldview comprises both scientific theory as well as religious beliefs, examining how these two sectors (science and religion) view the alien theme provides context within the broader sociocultural discourse. Therefore, in this chapter I also address the subject of aliens in context of the social soup which includes scientific and religious discussions around the possibility of ET visitations and provides brief insight into a loop that finds commonalities between fictional and narrative religions and Starseeds.

Starseeds on Starseeds:

There are copious online websites and articles written by Starseeds for anyone who is interested in better understanding the Starseed worldview. While there is a good body of work relating to the broader categories within which Starseeds fit - NRMs, New Age and ET-related spirituality - there is no specific scholarly discourse that I found on Starseeds. However, there are a number of books written by Starseeds themselves that provide insight into Starseed beliefs, such as Judith Kusel's books *Soul Empowerment* (2014) which "delves into the untold and unrecorded history of planet earth, the galaxies involved in the first experiment of life on planet earth" and *Why I was Born in Africa* (2017) describes how "she started tapping into the Crystal Pyramids and Crystalline Pyramid Grids, the Sphinxes, the Lightning Rod of the Earth, and massive energy fields and centres" and discovered "the true and untold history of Elysium - the first Supercontinent of [sic] highly advanced beings - and that of the second civilisation that inhabited Earth - the Lion Kingdom".⁷ Tim Whild has co-authored a book with Diana Cooper called *The Archangel Guide to Ascension: Visualizations to Assist Your Journey to the Light* (2015), that posits the Starseed belief that "[s]ince 2012, the energy on our planet has changed considerably and we are now in a transitional period into a new Golden Age" and offers guidelines and visualisations to "raise your energy and ascend your frequency to the fifth dimension and beyond".⁸

Ken Carey is one of the leading writers of Starseed books such as *The Starseed Transmissions* (1991), *Vision: A Personal Call to Create a New World* (1992), and *The Third Millennium: Living in the Posthistoric World* (1996). He is a New Age medium and channel who claims to communicate with angels or extraterrestrials who emphasise a central message propounded by practitioners of ET-spirituality that they have come to assist human transformation and bring forth a new planetary being or ascension to the 5th dimension. *The Ascension Manual: A Lightworker's Guide to Fifth Dimensional Living (The Ascension Manual Series Book 1)* (2015) and *The Ascension Manual - Part Two: Creating a Fifth Dimensional Life* (2016) by Caroline Oceana Ryan are popular books and her channelled 'Messages for Lightworkers' is also available on her website⁹ and on Facebook. Eva Marquez has seven books available on Amazon, with her most recent title *A Starseed Guide: Andromeda, Pleiades, and Sirius* (2016) where you can learn about "star nations, their home world, special places, and their unique abilities", gain insight into the "characteristics of Starseeds", and determine whether you might carry Starseed "ancestral DNA".¹⁰ Another popular book is *Starseed Survival: Ascension Instructions, 9-D Channelling Codes and Messages from Orion* by Krista Raisa (2016) which describes how she spontaneously began channelling messages from "amphibious

⁷ judithkusel.com.

⁸ <https://www.amazon.com/Archangel-Guide-Ascension-Visualizations-Journey/dp/178180639X>.

⁹ carolineoceanaryan.com.

¹⁰ <https://www.amazon.com.au/Starseed-Guide-Andromeda-Pleiades-Sirius-ebook/dp/B01DX8UJZ6>.

extraterrestrials” from Orion. As with the online articles found on *in5D.com*, these books are written by Starseeds who claim to have gained their information through *extraordinary* means, primarily through channelling an extraterrestrial being or beings, but also sometimes as with Judith Kusel, through a ‘cosmic’ kind of interdimensional travelling, more of which I will be discussing in a following chapter.

Outside the literature on NRMs, New Age and ET related spirituality, another area of discourse related to Starseeds is what one might term ‘pseudo-anthropology’ or ‘cosmic anthropology’ that provides an alternative, non-scientific perspective on Starseeds, such as works by Sasha Lessin, who has a PhD in Anthropology from UCLA and has co-authored three books *Anunnaki: Gods No More* (2012) *Anunnaki: Legacy of the Gods* (2014), and *Anunnaki: False Gods* (2015). Lessin believes that aeons ago powerful god-like aliens - the Anunnaki - visited earth from the planet Nibiru for gold to shield their planet and to breed with Homo Erectus to create us (Homo Sapiens) as slaves and soldiers. Lessin studied with Zecharia Sitchin, a Russian-American author who proposed an explanation for human origins involving ancient astronauts, and encouraged him to revise ‘ancient anthropology’ on this basis.

Starseeds From the New Religious Movement (NRM) Perspective:

Within scholarly discourse on NRMs there is an ongoing debate about definitions and categories for new and emerging religions (see Robbins 1998, 2005, Dawson 2008, Barker 2004, Melton 2007). Questions such as ‘are NRMs an extension of older religious forms, or something entirely different?’ and ‘how do we classify new religions in a secular age?’ are some of the primary themes that preoccupy scholars in this field. Interestingly, Hammer and Rothstein take the position in *The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements* (2012) that while “NRMs often present novel doctrines and advocate unfamiliar modes of behaviour, and have therefore often been perceived as controversial” the differences between new and old religions have been “greatly exaggerated” and there is not much inherent difference between them. They propose that we should be thinking of NRMs as “young religions” (2012:3) subject to similar travails, upheaval and critique that many older, established religions underwent at their inception. Generally however, scholars consider NRMs as “cultural and social expressions” (Saliba 2007:24) and the categorisation of NRMs is wide-ranging, often requiring different theoretical and interdisciplinary approaches (Bromley 2007:5-6). *Teaching New Religious Movements* (Bromley 2007) provides a comprehensive overview of the various theoretical considerations in regards to NRMs, with significant contributors to the field including Lorne Dawson, Sarah Pike, Douglas Cowan, Eileen Barker, Thomas Robbins, John Saliba and J. Gordon Melton. NRMs are “often associated with processes of social change and the critique of modernity”, and the Bromley volume identifies four interpretive frameworks for understanding the significance of

NRMs when viewed as a response to the social conditions of modernity; “NRMs as a protest against modernity, NRMs as laboratories of social experimentation, NRMs as a re-enchantment of the modern world, and NRMs as a response to the dialectic of trust and risk in late modernity” (Bromley 2007:xxiv).

From my understanding of Starseeds, they fit all four of the above criteria, but in a new postmillennial formulation which adds a different dimension to the analysis. For example, the first criteria - protest against modernity - infers a rejection of the ‘capitalist project’, or of modern technologies. Starseeds protest these in terms of their uses and abuses, and envisage a different version of modernity; one that employs technologies for the benefit of humankind as well as a more equitable economic model that is essentially egalitarian. It is not modernity as an ideology that they are protesting, it is the current version of modernity.

Starseeds and New Age:

For the most part, the Starseed worldview has strong roots in Theosophy and Western Esotericism, which Wouter Hanegraaff defines as “an inner core of true spirituality [that] lies hidden behind the outer surface of all religious traditions” (2000:292), and would be categorised within the somewhat broad category of ‘New Age’. Hanegraaff, considered to be a strong voice in the NRM field specialising in New Age, Esotericism and Gnosticism, provides a comprehensive socio-historical and empirical study of ‘New Age’ in his book, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (1998) as well as numerous articles in *Numen*, *Religion Compass*, and *Esoterica* magazines. Additionally, two of his recent (2016) articles uploaded to *academia.com* provide analyses that apply particularly well to how the study of Starseeds could be approached. For example, a recurring theme that scholars highlight in regards to NRMs (as well as in digital/posthuman anthropology), is that ‘reality’ and its definitions are subject to varying and shifting perceptions. In other words, “scholars seem to agree that ... the question of whether gods, demons, angels, or other spiritual entities or realities are ‘real’ or ‘imaginary’ is becoming ever less relevant to practitioners. As a result, the distinction between ‘belief’ and ‘non-belief’ is becoming a non-issue for them as well” (Hanegraaff 2016(a):239-240). This is a significant point to understanding how Starseeds, being both postmillennial and New Age, interpret and shape their cosmologies and lifeworld(s).

Paul Heelas’ book *The New Age Movement: The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity* (1996) provides a sociological reading of the New Age movement, where he addresses how ‘spirituality’ is becoming mainstream and incorporated into everyday life, from yoga classes to meditations adopted as practices by those in the health field, corporations and the education system. My perspective on Starseeds is that their worldview can be understood as a response to living within their current social field, and Heelas’ analysis provides supportive groundwork to understanding the

processes that have *normalised* the New Age aspects of Starseed beliefs into everyday cultural norms, a position that Christopher Partridge's theory of "occulture" also articulates. He suggests that:

Occult and paranormal ideas have become everyday and ordinary, thanks largely to the media and popular culture. From the advertising of products that claim to promote wellbeing to the ubiquity of musical and visual cultures fascinated with occultism and experiences of the paranormal, discourses antagonistic to secularization are being circulated within everyday life. ... In short, there is evidence for an influential culture of enchantment, which encompasses the marginal and the mainstream, the deviant and the conventional, and which circulates ideas, creates synergies, and forms new trajectories, all of which are driven by wider cultural forces, particularly those of popular culture and the media (Partridge 2015:10-11).

I argue that Starseeds are in a continuous and dynamic relationship with their surroundings, and Heelas defines an integral Starseed (and New Age) premise, that a person's conception of reality is central to how reality actually is for them. It is the 'spiritual' depth of the relationship between one's self and the 'here-and-now' that is given primary importance. Heelas' *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality* (2005) identifies the main areas of engagement for practitioners of "spirituality" as opposed to religion, as being those interested in the "'holistic milieu', consuming or practising complementary/alternative medicine, various forms of therapy, exercise, and environmental activism" (Taylor 2009:336) which are all categories that apply to Starseeds.

I was interested to find an article "New New Religions: Revisiting a Concept" by J. Gordon Melton who, after spending some time at an esoteric convention in 2007, observed that "the transition documented in the early 1990s - the move from the New age to the Next Age - had been completed", and this perhaps adds to the explanation why the term New Age does not fully encapsulate Starseed epistemology; they belong to the 'next age'. Melton further notes that "the substance of the New Age Esotericism did not go away, but altered subtly" (2007:107). Many Starseeds' beliefs are esoteric and arising out of New Age worldviews, but I would argue that the difference is more than subtle; rather, it represents a significant change wrought in part by digitisation and all the attendant effects of a digital age. Melton also writes that "[t]he premillennial overlay has been replaced with a post-millennial worldview" (2007:107). Notably, Starseeds have embraced much of what can be considered postmillennial, for example the enhanced communication of the internet as well as global community relationships. In this regard, Kusel writes that "the Internet was specifically given back to humankind, in order to bring this about [Ascension], so no matter where on earth the souls might be, they will always find each other in amazing ways, and the Internet has shrunk the world considerably - truly there are so many amazing ways to connect and meet each other now via Cyberspace" (Facebook, February 2017).

Aliens and Theosophy:

According to Christopher Partridge, the “Theosophical tradition has proved to be enormously significant in the history of UFO religion” (2004(b):164) and “UFO religion has been dominated by those from within the Theosophical tradition” including “George Adamski, the first and arguably the most influential contactee, and George King, the founder (in 1954) of one of the oldest UFO religions, the Aetherius Society” (2004(b):165). *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements* (Lewis 2004) includes a chapter by Andreas Grünschloß that discusses the historical emergence of the ufology themes out of modern esotericism, and “the millenarian aspect of ufological spirituality, the quest for a [sic] both a new science and a religious technology in UFO religions, and the religious significance of the ‘ancient astronaut’ hypothesis which informs groups such as the Raelian movement” (2008:420). A chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements Volume II* (Lewis & Tøllefsen 2016), “What Does God Need with a Starship? UFOs and Extraterrestrials in the Contemporary Religious Landscape” by Erik Östling discusses theosophical narratives as they relate to ET spiritual beliefs, and similarly to Heelas and Partridge “focuses on the practice of *naturalizing* the purported supernatural”, as well as “millennial aspirations of a coming transformation of the world with the arrival of saviour beings from the stars” (Lewis & Tøllefsen 2016: 12, my emphasis). The Grünschloß and Östling articles both articulate the definitive link between Theosophical narratives and those found in ufological spirituality.

J.E. Porter makes some salient observations that match my own observations of Starseeds. She writes, “Extraterrestrials have come to represent for many Spiritualists the successful achievement of the ultimate Spiritualist goal: the union between spirituality and science. Extraterrestrials are seen as spiritually superior to us because their science exceeds our own; their ‘science’ is perceived superior because it incorporates recognition of spiritual ‘truth’” (1996:337). Furthermore, Porter’s observations that practitioners of extraterrestrial spiritualist beliefs idealise science whilst at the same time critiquing “orthodox science for ignoring the ‘spiritual realm’” (1996:337) consolidates the idiosyncratic Starseed fascination with quantum theory and astrophysics whilst rejecting other mainstream scientific positions on issues such as vaccination or fluoridation.

Aliens in Anthropology:

The main subfield of anthropology that applies to Starseeds is based around their central belief in their alien origins. Sluka and Robben observe that since the 1970s there has been some “speculative ‘space’ or ‘extraterrestrial’ anthropology preparing for future fieldwork on space stations, space craft, and proposed human settlements on the Moon, Mars, and beyond, including the possibility of fieldwork with intelligent nonhuman extraterrestrials” (2012:3) citing *Cultures Beyond the Earth* (Maruyama *et al.* 1975) as a primary example. More recently published is an edited volume

ET Cultures: Anthropology in Outer Spaces “about how people find and relate to one another around the idea of extraterrestrial life and UFOs” (Battaglia 2005:vii), which covers a range of approaches to the ET theme and alien discourse from political power struggles to the attribution by sufferers of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome of their illness as being “Host Planet Rejection Syndrome”, as well as a discussion on alien tongues “from its historical intersection with the impassioned projects of communication with Mars in late nineteenth-century ... to the popular cult phenomenon of Klingon language conventions” (Battaglia, 2005:viii).

Christopher Roth’s chapter in this volume offers a historical review of alien encounters, alien discourse and groups, and socio-cultural reformulations of prevailing themes such as racism, inequality, and fears of nuclear war into alien-based narratives. Roth discusses “prolific New Age pulp writer Brad Steiger” and his books written in the 80s and 90s about ‘star people’ and ‘star children’ whose parents wondered “if some of their own, Earth-dwelling, human-looking children might not be alien hybrids” (2005:89). Roth also discusses Harvard psychologist John Mack’s studies into alien abductions and experiences, as well as Mack’s clients, “many of whom self-identified as aliens or hybrids” (2005:89). (Mack’s volume *Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens* [1994] provides insight into the emotional interiority and beliefs of his clients that bears considerable resemblance to the experiences and beliefs of Starseeds, and I refer to his work where applicable throughout this thesis.) However, Roth sees the social function of “alien self-identification” as “structured similarly to the phenomenon of reincarnation beliefs” and sees this phenomenon as an extension of a “radical-individualist trend” (2005:89). Additionally, he posits an argument that people who self-identify as alien often co-opt themes found in minority politics discourse, and that “being an abductee or hybrid is one of the few ways an American WASP can be ethnic” (2005:90). Although Starseeds are also primarily Westerners like the star people Roth describes, Starseeds differ from star people as they believe their Starseed origins are innate and intrinsic rather than imposed. Starseeds fall into the ‘radical-individualist’ category Roth describes, though one could argue that this is a wider trend and not limited to NRMs.

Further to this, Battaglia, Valentine and Olson observe that “outer space is being tentatively engaged by (and engaging) cultural values and varieties of sociality, in ways that require new anthropological questions” (2015:248) and this relates well to my analyses of Starseeds. Although human, they believe they are also ‘alien’ and feel that they embody characteristics and traits and a sense of Being that is non-human, or even beyond-human. Their sense of perception, cognition, relationship to Earth, relationship to worldly structures - politics, education, health, money - and their definitions of reality seemingly transcend ‘normal’ human definitions and scale. Battaglia et al provide a new perspective, one that reframes and repositions the human-on-earth scaled, contextualised and

‘decentred’ against the broad and wide spectrum of space. As they write, “[b]ut thinking with whole Earth, in particular, presents us with a problem - and a provocation - in regard to context since, until recently, human attachments to the planet’s surface have been the ultimate grounds of their actions, ideas, and relations, as well as of anthropologists’ analyses of these” (Battaglia, Valentine & Olson 2015:245). Interestingly, the concept of a ‘decentred human’ features in readings of the Anthropocene, this time with the decentred human being (or as Latour [2017] calls us, *Anthropos*), with the main theme being that humans must recognise that we are not above, or beyond, but a part of living ecosystems that support and sustain us.

Battaglia writes in *ET Cultures* about a NRM that shares some commonalities with Starseeds, the Raelians, who “are a creationist-science religious movement ... drawn to the idea that ‘extraterrestrial scientists created life on Earth’” and see the human being as “artworks in progress” as they strive to fulfil “their inherent capacity for higher consciousness” (2005:150). It was interesting to read about another group who while similar to are also markedly different from Starseeds. Starseeds and Raelians both share a belief that science will reveal the truth of their claims, there is a common focus on the importance of DNA, and they both believe they possess inherent higher capacities. However, unlike Raelians, Starseeds see themselves or their original souls as alien, not the creation of alien beings, and they have a strong religious belief in a Godhead which they call Source, whereas Raelians see *Elohim* aliens as their scientifically advanced masters. And briefly, another New Age religious group that bears some resemblance in terms of a belief in a relationship with science and ‘alien’ beings is Scientology, but again Starseeds differ markedly. Without a strong hierarchical structure, charismatic leadership, doctrines, extensive vetting and processes, Starseeds are a much more loosely affiliated collective, united by their innate alien origins and their ability to ascend into higher dimensionalities.

NASA, Aliens and Anthropology:

Three symposia on Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) were organised by Douglas A. Vakoch and held at annual conferences of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) from 2004-2006, representing the major SETI research areas “judged important by the established scholarly community of anthropologists and archaeologists in the United States” (Vakoch 2014:xiv-xv). A NASA History Series 12,000-word treatise “Archaeology, Anthropology and Interstellar Communication”¹¹ was produced as a result of the symposia, with contributions from eminent academics from the sciences and social sciences including two historians, a senior scientist at the SETI Institute, an astrobiologist, an archaeologist, a linguist, a psychologist, a cognitive scientist, a professor of religious

¹¹https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/files/Archaeology_Anthropology_and_Interstellar_Communication_TAGGED.pdf.

studies and six anthropologists. The most prominent points from reading through the NASA treatise is the admission that the anthropological tools we currently possess might not apply in the event of an ET arrival. The overall consensus from the NASA documents is that without data it is a very difficult task to predict anything concrete, but nonetheless attempts must be made to identify which of the interpretive tools that anthropologists have developed might be applicable here. Also, what anthropology's past experiences vis-à-vis colonialism might predict as to how we might react to ET contact, or how we might make sense of the non-human, intelligent, extraterrestrial or alien 'other'. As Vakoch observes, "given the differences that exist among human cultures in terms of how we perceive, interpret, and categorize our surroundings, it is reasonable to think that a truly alien society would consist of beings who do these things in ways unlike those of humans" (2014:148).

Aliens, Project MUSE, and Re-enchantment:

Another source of academic discussion and information regarding ETs is Project Muse¹², which collects and disseminates "digital humanities and social sciences content for the scholarly community" particularly books and journals. Material available from this source provides some insights with regard to the link and progression from the ideas of alien abductions to the Starseed belief in an intrinsic alien identity. Project Muse includes a collection of articles that draw "upon sites of political, scientific, and economic engagement that source specifically to the extraterrestrial" where the authors argue that "the 'extreme' limits and ever-opening horizons - epistemological and physical - [are] provoking new understandings of humanness, environment, temporality, and of inter-species life as we think we understand it, here on Earth" (Valentine, Olson & Battaglia 2012:1006). Consistent with my position that Starseeds are a *representation* of the social field, the Project Muse articles discuss the human in relation to political, economic and environmental concerns (issues that concern Starseeds greatly) as well as the futuristic "promise of a radically transformed human social future" (Valentine 2012: 1049), which again is an oft-articulated Starseed hope. It seems that alien-based narratives inspire both a reassessing of what it means to be human, as well as a reappraisal and appreciation for the fragility of our biological selves upon this planet. Valerie Olson for example argues that "NEOphiles [members of an informal, unofficial, and loosely-organized American space policy advocacy network] use language that mirrors environmentalist discourse about ecological interconnectedness and ... campaign for a new understanding of a solar system in which Earthlings do not just dwell but act" (Olson 2012:1033). Starseeds see themselves as engaged and responsible for the well-being of the planet and are compelled to act across various social and physical spheres for the benefit of the future.

Abou Farnan's article in Project Muse explains and reframes the theory of re-enchantment in terms of postmillennial ontologies when he describes how "the convergence of a number of extreme

¹² <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.

technoscientific projects - AI, Nanotechnology, Life Extension - has activated science-based cosmological visions in which humans and their 'intelligence' are given a *central purpose in the unfolding of the universe*" (2012:1069, my emphasis). As stated earlier, Starseeds embrace scientific knowledge and technological advances as long as they are of greater human benefit, and believe that science can and will (eventually) provide rational explanations for their beliefs. Starseeds such as Tim Whild believe that we are *all* Starseeds with an important role in helping the world ascend; the Ascension is being accelerated as more of us come 'awake' or to use sociological terminology, are 're-enchanted'.

Where Aliens Meet Science, Religion and the Human Imaginary:

Arguably, the present "period of growing excitement about the universe, especially the prospect of discovering extraterrestrial life" and the wonder of "exoplanet mania" that is sweeping through the scientific community of astroscience (Peters 2014:444) have added some vital ingredients towards shaping the Starseed worldview. One may have heard about claims of alien visitations and abductions, speculations about Area 51, or crop circles in England since around the 1960s, and perhaps we know someone who has seen inexplicable lights in the sky which they attribute to UFOs and alien activity. Popular shows like *The X-Files*, *Star Trek*, *Stranger Things* or movies such as *Alien*, *Transformers*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Guardians of the Galaxy* and many more have enhanced the concept of aliens in contemporary popular culture. Interest in alien and other life forms predates modernity as well, and can be found in texts such as '*True Stories*' written in the 2nd century by Lucian of Samosata (see Mheallaigh 2010, Bittarello 2008). The call of alien species held interest in the popular imagination through the early modern age, with books such as Fontanelle's '*Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*' in 1686 (see Denning 2011), *The Plurality of Inhabited Worlds* by Camille Flammarion in 1862 (see Jones 1980), and later, stories by H.G Wells such as *The Time Machine* in 1895 or *The War of the Worlds* in 1897, which were enlivened by scientific progresses of the times (see also Bonting 2003).

According to Michael Crowe, "interactions between religion and ideas of extraterrestrial life commenced in ancient times and continued through the medieval period" and "the nature and intensity of this debate intensified in 1543 when Nicolaus Copernicus shocked his contemporaries ... with a well-developed set of arguments in support of the heliocentric theory of the universe" (2001:209-210). A doctrine, 'plurality of worlds', became an acceptable intellectual consideration by the end of the 1700s and through scientific world-expanding revelations by thinkers such as Galileo, Newton and Descartes. Upon realisation by the post-Copernican thinkers that the stars themselves were suns orbiting other systems, the idea that life could possibly exist on these other systems took hold within theist circles, and for example James Ferguson argued in 1757 "[i]t is no ways probable

that the Almighty, who always acts with infinite wisdom and does nothing in vain, should create so many glorious Suns, fit for so many important purposes, and place them at such distances from one another, without proper objects near enough to be benefitted by their influences” (Cited in Crowe 2001:212). Accordingly, theism and a teleological belief in extraterrestrial life became reconciled, based on a religio-metaphysical assumption of ‘plenitude’ and God’s creativity (Crowe 2001:210-215).

Questions as to how the proven (if it were so) existence of extraterrestrials would impact upon theological constructs of faith and doctrine are still prevalent amongst scholars of religion. Exciting discoveries in space, such as Tabettha Boyajian’s recent discovery of the anomalous flickering of a distant star KIC 8462852 that showed “unusual dips on day-long timescales that are too large to be explained by planet transits or similar phenomena”¹³ and the fact that “NASA’s Kepler Explorer along with other data gathering tools have nominated between 4,000 and 5,000 candidates for exoplanet status, including more than a thousand confirmed planets orbiting stars within our Milky Way” (Peters 2014:445) have ignited the world of astroscience, as well as garnered a lesser known discipline, astrotheology. The basic tenants of astrotheology include an analysis, consideration and recognition of the prevailing geocentrism and anthropocentrism in theology, a definition that could as easily apply to anthropological theorisation of my subjects, as is argued by the proponents of xenanthropology in the previous section. As Peters observes, the parameters that shape theological and indeed anthropological frameworks would be irrevocably altered if “the universe is populated with sentient and intelligent beings within and beyond the Milky Way” (2014:448).

Evangelical James Ferguson uses the term ‘Myth of the Extraterrestrials’ to refer to “the idea that intelligent extraterrestrials exist and that interaction with them will inaugurate a new era in human existence” (cited in Peters 2014:452) and it is interesting to note the increased presence of aliens and science fiction tropes in our modern life. There is a commonly held contention that science fiction influences science proper with many scientists citing a love of science fiction as their original inspiration for their field, and it is the intertwining of multiple strands - religious beliefs, science fiction, science fact, and the broad domain of media - that is applicable to the ‘space’ that Starseeds occupy. Furthermore, the nexus between science-fiction, media and popular culture as well as advances in science, astrophysics and quantum theories is perpetuated and fostered by the fictive and disembedded (Lambek 2012) ontologies of digitalia into the social field that Starseeds occupy.

Fiction-Based and Narrative Religions:

Although Starseeds would not agree with this assessment, their worldview bears epistemological similarities to fiction-based religions that appeared “in the second half of the twentieth century and continue to do so to the present day” (Cusack & Kosnáč 2017). A “fiction-based

¹³ <http://aasnova.org/2016/09/16/update-on-the-puzzling-boyajians-star/>.

religion”, as the name implies, is a religion which is based on works of fictional literature. Probably the most famous of these is the Church of Scientology, founded in 1954 by the American science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard. Another well-known example is Jediism which originated with the Star Wars movies but has developed into an order that follows the moral and spiritual codes demonstrated by the fictional Jedi. As an interesting side note, in the 2001 New Zealand census over 53,000 people or 1.5 percent of the population identified themselves as Jedi, making New Zealand the highest per capita population of reported Jedi in the world at that time.¹⁴

Starseed beliefs also align somewhat with Danielle Kirby’s definition of ‘Otherkin’, a ‘narrative religion’ which is “a loosely affiliated group who believe that they are something more than human” (2012:310). In the progress of my research I found myself asking whether I should be considering Starseeds as being something *more, other than* or *beyond* human, and Venetia Robertson’s work on Therianthropy communities (people who believe in the ability to ‘shapeshift’ or metamorphose into other animals) found that her subjects were “re-envisioning ... [their] ontology to incorporate the nonhuman into the human self” as a “source of personal re-enchantment” (2013:315). Whilst not directly related to (nor excluding) UFO mythologies, Robertson describes a multi-faceted self-identified state of Being that is both human and not, a description that fits well into how Starseeds see themselves to be.

Kirby’s research into Otherkin found a “relative lack of hierarchy and diffuse authority structures ... and use of bricolage and occultural motifs”¹⁵ (Cusack 2017), characteristics and features which also describe the Starseed milieu. She also observes how popular tropes and fictional characters are combining with the sacred in new ways in today’s world, which applies well to how Starseeds appropriate popular science-fiction tropes and current scientific advances both in space explorations and theoretically, and combine them with theosophical beliefs around divinity and theosis into their worldview. Furthermore, Partridge’s theory of ‘occulture’ mentioned above supports my viewpoint that Starseeds beliefs are an understandable *response* to their social field.

Cusack’s observation that “[t]he inner, psychological nature of identification and transformation among Otherkin and Therians necessitates that the scholar take an interest in beliefs, metaphysics, and the ways that fictions are integrated into the personal worldviews of individuals”¹⁶ (2017), is similar to the objectives I have pursued in my research into Starseeds. Furthermore, Cusack’s statement, “online ethnography as a research method requires scholars to notice textual, discursive interactions, and to accord weight to expressed ideas and feelings, rather than to look for ‘real world’

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jedi_census_phenomenon.

¹⁵ https://www.academia.edu/19205057/Fiction_Invention_and_Hyper-reality_An_Introduction.

¹⁶ https://www.academia.edu/19205057/Fiction_Invention_and_Hyper-reality_An_Introduction.

activities”¹⁷ describes my own position as a researcher who conducted much of her ethnography based within the online, digital medium.

Summary:

When I first looked at Starseeds it seemed that they were a unique NRM without a distinguishable forerunner-group, but statements by Kusel on *Facebook* confirmed for me a link between the beliefs of star people that Roth and Mack describe and Starseeds. Where they are similar is as Mack describes, “A distinct but important aspect of this kind of transpersonal experience is an abductee’s sense of possessing a double human/alien identity” (1994:77). Where they differ is how they view this alien identity. From the perspective of the subjective Being, the transition from an imposed alien identity through alien abductions to the adoption of an intrinsic alien-soul identity, entails a transition between the self as subject to the ‘world as without’ to a position that is subject to the ‘world as within’. More colloquially, in the alien abduction experiences which for example *happened* to Mack’s subjects, they had no choice or agency; the world imposed its will upon them, whereas Starseeds see themselves as the centre of the(ir) world, creating and choosing their experiences, including their birth on Earth at this pivotal point in time. Starseeds emphasise what they think of as a universal law which is ‘free will’, and for them everything that occurs to them is linked to their own choice and will, consciously or not. This transition is interesting and could be linked to Abou Farnan’s (2012) description of science-based cosmological visions mentioned above.

What is intriguing about the Starseed worldview is the convergence of a number of themes; extraterrestrials, science, New Age/Theosophy and theological constructs of divinity and theosis, situated within the context of current socio-political, economic and environmental issues. Although there is no anthropological discourse specifically on Starseeds, relevant tropes and themes can be traced through the broader discourse that applies to the Starseed worldview, some of which I have noted in this chapter. Based upon my readings through this, as well as my research with Starseeds, I see them as historically placed because one can track the progression of their ideology based around established religious and spiritual themes, especially Esotericism and Theosophy but also to a lesser extent Christianity and Eastern religions. In support of my position that Starseeds are responsive to their surroundings and social field, it is clear that the Starseed cosmology has also been shaped by popular culture and the human imaginary that combines both fictive and factual narratives into an interpretation of reality and lifeworld. They are also a socio-religious ‘next age’ formulation that reflects not only the current social and political climate, but also the shifting and disembedded ontologies of the postmillennium and digitalia.

¹⁷https://www.academia.edu/19205057/Fiction_Invention_and_Hyper-reality_An_Introduction.

CHAPTER THREE:

The Starseed Worldview

As above, so below; as below, so above - Second Hermetic Principle.¹⁸

A Vertical Moment:

Being an immersed participant-observer in the Starseed world, and for the most part maintaining an 'open' and non-judgemental outlook on their beliefs, I experienced Ascension symptoms and felt 'energy changes'. It continuously amazed me how Starseeds from different parts of the world all seemed to be going through similar feelings and experiences, and for that matter, I noticed that some non-Starseeds were going through similar sensations. I have however, questioned whether one could be absolutely and definitively sure that Starseeds weren't *actually* ascending into a 5th dimensional state of Being. I might believe in many different versions and interpretations of the Starseed story - that they are a social response to economic, political, environmental and other conditions and pressures, that they are a result of living a modern, media-saturated digitised world, or that they have emerged out of a fascination with science fiction stories interwoven into an occultured world - but no, I cannot categorically state that there is no such thing as the 5th dimension nor can I say with certainty that *I know* that Starseeds are not ascending.

Watching Carl Sagan's demonstration on dimensions was awesome, especially how he explains the way that a two-dimensional being cannot have full comprehension of a three-dimensional being simply because it lacks the conceptual tools to be able to do so:

The three-dimensional creature sees an attractive, congenial looking square [two-dimensional], watches it enter its house, and decides in a gesture of interdimensional amity to say hello. 'Hello' says the three-dimensional creature, 'how are you, I am a visitor from the 3rd dimension'. Well, the poor square looks around his closed house, sees no one there, and what's more *has witnessed a greeting coming from his insides, a voice from within*. He surely is getting a little *worried* about his *sanity*. The three-dimensional creature is unhappy about being considered a psychological aberration, and so he descends to actually enter Flatland. The three-dimensional creature exists in Flatland only partially. A plane, a cross-section through him can be seen.¹⁹

An Overview of Starseed Beliefs:

In this thesis, it is not my task to prove, disprove, or question the validity or truth of Starseed beliefs, but rather to understand and convey them fairly and accurately. This chapter will present the central Starseed beliefs as they view them. My purpose is to illustrate that it is their worldview that

¹⁸ <http://www.sacred-texts.com/eso/kyb/kyb04.htm>.

¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnUREICzGc0>.

differentiates them from everyday 'normal' (western) people, and furthermore, it is these beliefs that identify them as Starseed and not only New Age. You may very well converse with a Starseed in your daily life without knowing that they are Starseed, for they are generally undifferentiated in how they look, dress, and talk from your local librarian, your postwoman, or your teacher. For example, Tim Whild, one of my main Starseed proponents, looked and dressed very ordinarily in our Skype meeting; a plaid shirt, closely cropped hair, with a round-jawed southern English accent. He did have in his hand however, out of view until he showed me, a large, clear crystal in the shape of an Ankh symbol. Whild works as a landscape gardener.

Starseeds Come from Elsewhere:

Starseeds hold a set of intriguing beliefs and concepts one might consider 'outside the norm', the main one, as noted previously, being that their soul originates from another planet or star system, such as the Pleiades or Sirius or even from somewhere completely unknown to us. In my conversation with Starseed Tim Whild on Skype, he told me that Starseeds have many places of origin, and although the soul may originate from a particular place, it travels to different star systems to learn and grow. He told me that he himself comes from the Central Suns but has spent time on Venus, and he said that people might hold memories of different places and are sometimes unsure of their origin. David Miller, a spiritual channel, has described the 'Central Suns' in this way:

The source of the Creator energy, the source of light, and the source of spirit can be found in the stars ... There is one star in our galaxy which is the centre of the galaxy, from which all other stars came. It was the first primal star. This galactic Central Sun is connected to all other central suns in the universe, including the immense Central Sun at the centre of the universe (2012:34).

Below is an example of the kinds of beliefs Starseeds hold about their origins, taken from Starseeds.net *Facebook* page on May 23rd 2016. I have deleted their names and removed all links and hyperlinks to preserve their privacy.

Starseeds.Net

Mango, FL, United States

Many starseeds remember a life on one or both of these ancient continents.



I don't remember my past lives on earth. But I do remember before being born into this life of being on a spaceship looking down at my mom walking on the sidewalk



Other Starseeds remember life on other worlds!



A world with two moons and a reddish orange sky.



This picture I found is what my home is kind of like. We lived underground, so there were less roads. Out in the ocean waters there were crystal towers that collected sun and energy from the bluish sun. Our world had higher oxygen which allowed insects to be larger and most populous species, therefore our main food source. Much of our lands are connected through underground and underwater tunnels. Sadly I'm not sure if it's still there...or the exact fate of my people. Our planet was under attack by an invading force of a negative reptilian (I know not all are bad), tall gray, and dark skinned naga force. We were being assisted in our efforts to keep our home. I was being trained in PSR and also psionic defense. I don't remember much more, I'm still learning. My people resemble anthro earth foxes, but we've got differences, I hope one day to find others like me here. Hopefully ones who can tell me if we still have our home, or at least that many more survivex, maybe we've even become a bigger part of the galactic community. We are a peaceful people, who like to help and heal.



I remember lymera and have gifts in healing that I use now from this time.



Ahhh, sweet memories 🌸



Lemuria xx

Starseed Star groups, otherwise known as soul families, have particular characteristics and personality traits, and *in5D.com* provides various articles to help determine whether you are a Starseed and which star group you might belong to. One of the questions I asked my respondents was how they knew they were Starseeds, in the hope that I might understand the mechanics of their belief. The most common refrain was that they always knew that they were different, and that they felt out of place here living in a world with injustice, disharmony and hate. Many Starseeds speak of a longing to go home to a place of relative peace and higher energetic vibrations (Starship beliefs about energy are described in more detail below). Clayton Popa, a questionnaire respondent, wrote of his being “a loner” in his childhood with a number of imaginary friends, and in response to the question ***Can you please tell me if you come from somewhere else apart from Mother Earth?*** he explained that:

I have always felt that i dont belong here, that i come from somewhere else as i never really feel comfortable anywhere. I have been told that i come from another galaxy or realm which to me creates a more warming and understanding. I feel more at home when in asian countries and around asian people as they closely resemble the facial like features of the people where i am from. I couldnt tell you the name of where i am from nor what it looks like as i am still on my path of learning. However i do feel as if my artwork does create a picture of some of the landscape areas from these locations.

In response to the same question, Stargazing Angel wrote, "I have been told that I was recruited by the Pleadians. I am either from Arcturus or Andromeda. I am pulled toward the latter." She elaborates further in response to the question, ***How do you know this? Have you had any tangible experiences that have shown you this on a deep level?***

I recently learned this but it makes sense to me. I tend to feel homesick meaning I call somewhere else "home." I meditated once where I returned "home." It's a place full of glass castles. I was on a bridge and all these people were waiting for me. When I approached them, they surrounded me and told me I had been gone so long. They started applauding me and telling me I did a wonderful job. They didn't seem familiar to me like I forgot who they were. I feel this is my home and this event will take place in the future when I finished my job on Earth.

Another of my respondents, Mystreni wrote:

I believe all beings on this planet extend from elsewhere. All things with a DNA component is a bi-product from outside of this planet - not indigenous. Science tells us that billions of years ago this planet was a sphere of molten lava. This confirms my belief that we are from elsewhere. Additionally, scientists have found recent meteorites with alien DNA in them. It is my hypothesis that beings from all over the universe brought beings here and planted DNA all around the globe. The metamorphous evolved from there.

Further to this, Mystreni stated that "Earth to me is a canvas to our experiences as a collective consciousness. Everyone living on earth does not belong to earth; we are simply stopping over to experience how to create".

A *Facebook* post I came across through one of my Starseed friend's (Neo Bluestar) page provides insight into the experiences of one of his friends with a Blue Avian alien species:

One day I looked into the mirror and Blue was looking back!!!! Just to be clear, I was standing in front of the mirror, but the face that was looking back was the blue face of my Over Soul. If I had not, in my heart felt the immense depth of love and compassion, I would have thought him fearsome, the type of fearsome that makes you want to quiver and drop to your knees!!! He made it clear, in a direct transmission of understanding beyond words that He was NOT any named, "so-called" god, more like their grandfather, and that while He had been of great influence to the Earth and the scurrying ants of humanity, he had never incarnated here; the difference in dimensional integrity was too great.

My friend Narelle Whitedove has had a number of close encounters with extraterrestrial beings and sees them everywhere, including a sleepy beachside suburb north of Cairns, Australia where she lives. She told me that "there are so many walking around us, not many people know. They're here to help, and they're going, like, hurry up, it's time". Narelle described an experience when

she came close to death through a fall off a waterfall: “This blue being, so blue, came into my presence, and I knew then, that I’m ok. I’m still processing, because the energy of their light beings is quite high”.

Further in our conversation, Narelle said:

My first physical experience, like, really physical experience, I was young, I remember being eleven. And then, I had a full experience here in Cairns, in Trinity Beach, and this being was like, as tall as the trees and was gold. Beautiful long fingers. I remember saying to my physical self, ‘this is not me’, and I’m like, looking above myself, from the trees, ‘what’s happening, what’s going on?’ My girls said to me ‘mum, are you alright’, and I slept for five days, slipping in and out of consciousness, and woke up with these big almond eyes and this long face. And I was burnt. “Like sunburn?” (Tanya asking) “Well no, like being fried. And I remember being in this like, chamber, with all these beings working on me.

Interestingly, I asked Tim Whild specifically ‘who is a Starseed, is everyone a Starseed’? He said yes, he thought so, though there was a very small percentage of people originating from Earth. The more common opinion in the Starseed milieu however, is that there are only a number of Starseeds on Earth who when ‘awakened’ will help bring forth significant changes to Earth’s energetic composition.

What are the Dimensions?

Belief in different dimensional realities is not a new concept, and can be seen as early as Plato who according to religious scholar Christopher Plaisance described the soul as “ascending through the celestial spheres” (2015:392) and was “taken seriously, with the doctrine of ἀναγωγή (ascent) - i.e. ascent through the cosmic and hypercosmic realms by means of the soul’s ὄχημα (vehicle) - being one of the primary theurgic practices” (2015:392). The ‘normal’, scientific definition for dimensions is described on Quora by Bob Singer, a NASA engineer, thus:

Any object that has a length has one dimension. A length and width, has two. A length, a width, and a height, has three. An object that actually exists from the time it came into existence until it ceases to exist has a duration, the fourth dimension. The remaining theoretical dimensions proposed by superstring theory exist but we cannot sense them, although the math that describes our theory of physics says they are too small for us to perceive.²⁰

The most commonly understood definition of the third dimension is this reality as we know it, the corporeal world, our bodies and physical form. However, Starseeds also view the three-dimensional world as malleable and manipulable with boundaries that can fluctuate and reconfigure, that is, boundaries of time and space, matter and non-matter, based around a mix of New Age definitions of

²⁰ <https://www.quora.com/How-is-the-4th-dimension-explained-or-the-ones-past-it>.

'energy' as well as principles of particle physics. Atomically, all matter is comprised of quarks and leptons, with "force-carrying particles called bosons" that transmit "discrete amounts of energy called quanta from one particle to another"²¹ (*fnal.gov*) plus an equal amount of anti-matter. For the Starseed, it is very feasible that matter can be without fixed corporeal boundaries, and that energy - and hence matter - can be influenced by one's thoughts, premised upon quantum theory.

Starseeds think of the 4th dimension as the realm of the mind, time, thought, dreams and liminal states. Whild stated in his Skype interview with me that we have progressed and are currently in a 4th dimensional state of being. The 4th dimension according to the channelled messages of Starseed writer on *in5D.com* Vera Ingeborg is "the dream world" or "astral plane". "In this plane it is also possible to tap into the collective consciousness" and is the "plane that shamans and ancient civilisations travelled to find out more and connect to the spiritual realms". It seems that in the 4th dimension what you imagine and think can eventuate, and thus the imperative is for Starseeds to be aware of their thoughts and not give in to negative beliefs. By thinking in a positive and 'light' manner, their realities will be positive and light. Plaisance in his examination of theosophist ideologies in new religions writes that in 1671 Henry More published *Enchiridion metaphysicum*, "which is the first instance of theological speculation on the fourth spatial dimension" where he "theorised that while the body's 'spissitude' (thickness) takes up space in the three familiar dimensions, the spirit's thickness was extended into a physically unobservable fourth dimension" (2015:398).

The 5th dimension is a more advanced and refined realm of Being and awareness, as Starseed Georgi Stankov describes:

The fifth dimension is the first dimension of consciousness outside the constraints of space and time (i.e., the third and fourth dimensions). And beings in the fifth dimension have no mass and are therefore not subject to the effects of gravitational fields. While the fifth dimension has no physicality per se, it does have form, or objects. But from your perspective, forms in the fifth dimension seem ephemeral—having no substance or reality. When you enter the fifth dimension you will still experience yourself as having a form (i.e., a body). And things in the fifth dimension will appear to you as solid as the forms you experience in your current reality. But your experience of space will be much more fluid, and time as a reference point will not exist. Dimensional evolution is the development of the ability to be aware of, and operate within, multiple dimensions simultaneously.²²

Many Starseeds can be in these different dimensions, including higher ones simultaneously, and often talk about the need to ground themselves into the (literal) Earth to cope with the dizziness

²¹ <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/science/particle-physics-101/science-matter-energy-space-time.html>.

²² <https://www.stankovuniversallaw.com/2015/05/the-fifth-dimensional-perspective-transcending-space-and-time/>.

of inhabiting and traversing the higher dimensional realms where their perception of matter is constantly shifting. Dimensional shifts for the Starseed also involves a deep cleansing of the psyche. Emotional wounds, significant events, vows and promises, and deep-seated beliefs from this life as well as from past lives, are believed to be carried in our DNA. As Humanity Healing states on *in5D* “You [sic] dealing with immense biological changes and you also have all the psychological, mental/conceptual and emotional issues that you inherited when you arrived to deal with as well.”²³ She further states, “You will have to move into self-acceptance of yourself as well as of others in order to create a biochemical and an electromagnetic environment in your bodies that will optimize the opportunity for the body to mutate easily” (2015). Releasing oneself from the delusionary force that comprises the 3D Matrix is a priority for the Starseed wishing to ascend, and “mastery means you are so consciously aware of what you are putting out there, that you take responsibility for every single word, deed, action, inaction, and everything you ARE!” (Kusel, *Facebook*).

Ultimately, beyond the 5th dimension is the 7th dimension (and presumably a 6th in between), which is where Judith Kusel believes our souls originate from and belong. As denser 3rd dimensional forms disintegrate and Starseeds “step through massive portals” that are “like stepping into a wormhole, and like being shaken into pieces”, Starseeds “will emerge reborn into a much higher and less dense state”. For Kusel, the Ascension is well underway, with the planet in a process of disintegration and reassembling into a much higher form:

She is pulsating now with new life, to the highest degree. It is beautiful to see and to feel this new vibrancy, the radiance, as she moves fully now into the 5th and is already preparing for the 7th state, the original state she was born into. Thus prepare for the new cosmic waves hitting us now. What we experienced before, is nothing compared with what we are now entering for the next ten years, starting now! (Kusel *Facebook*).

The Ascension and Shift from the 3rd to the 5th Dimension:

Starseeds believe that although they may have spent many lifetimes on Earth, they have chosen to incarnate in this lifetime to be a part of a celestially supported event, the Ascension, and to “assist Planet Earth and her peoples to bring in the Golden Age at the turn of the millennium” (El Masri, *in5D.com*). Bill El Masri writes:

Starseeds incarnate into the same conditions of helplessness and total amnesia concerning their identity, origins and purpose as do Earth humans. However, the genes of starseeds are encoded with a “wake-up call” designed to “activate” them at a pre-determined moment in life. Awakening can be gentle and gradual, or quite dramatic and abrupt. In either event, memory is restored to varying degrees, allowing starseeds to consciously take up their

²³ <http://in5d.com/dealing-with-ascension-symptoms/>.

missions. Their connections to the Higher Self are also strengthened, permitting them to be largely guided by their inner knowing.²⁴

Typing 'ascension' into Google yields definitions and descriptions of Christ's ascension, but adding '5d' yields 487,000 pages discussing the Starseed Ascension. The Starseed Ascension, henceforth known as Ascension, is described by Sandra Walter on her website (found via *in5D*): "The Ascension process is the transformation of the physical body, light body and the consciousness which animates it, in order to hold a higher vibrational state. Your higher self is merging with your lower dimensional self after a very long separation in the 3D experience"²⁵ (*sandrawalter.com*). For the Starseed, the Ascension is a kind of 'bringing down' of a higher vibrational state of consciousness into this present reality, rather than a 'lifting-up' or rising process as it is with the Ascension of Christ. Furthermore, and notable in terms of NRM theories of sacralisation and self-actualisation, it is the Starseed (and if we follow Whild's definition, this means everyone) that personally undergoes an Ascension which contrasts significantly to the Christian ascension, where Jesus, uniquely the 'Son of God', rises to heaven whilst everyone else remains an (earthbound) sinner.

My research participants often said that they were part of an ever-growing grid of consciousness to 'earth' the higher energies. They see themselves as points of etheric light *embodying* 'higher energies' and thereby transforming and transmuting their surroundings by their state of Being. The prevailing belief is that with enough Starseeds transmuting the world, and also with the help and guidance from higher light beings (more on this later), Earth and 3rd dimensional realities will alter and transform into the 5th dimension. Whild provides many descriptions of the Ascension, and as one reads through his blogs, the Ascension seems to be a process that happens from *without*, or in other words, celestially and from above, affecting us on earth, as well as *within* as a response to these waves of energy. Whild writes, "Wave after wave of high frequency energy is washing over the planet, and through every cell of our bodies, physical, emotional and spiritual, driving the light body activation process at its maximum capacity".²⁶ Starseeds believe that as the Ascension is occurring, the response of the individual is dependent on how attuned they are, and how much inner work they have done to release old and negative beliefs. Heelas identifies a 'Self spirituality' that is based around "a monistic assumption that the Self itself is sacred" (1996:2), which is a foundational belief of the Starseed. Starseeds define their true and higher selves as 'authentic', as opposed to 3rd dimensional understandings of the Self characterised by worldly traits, such as greed and pursuit of money, success, and power. Ascent into the 5th dimension would mean to live in the 'true' version of reality, similar to Heelas' description of New Age desires to exist in a realm of "creativity, love, tranquillity,

²⁴ <http://in5d.com/all-about-starseeds/>.

²⁵ <http://www.sandrawalter.com/what-is-ascension>.

²⁶ <http://timwhild.com/2014/01/>.

wisdom, power, authority” (1996:19). In the 5th dimension, the Starseed will also possess greater abilities such as telepathy, telekinesis, time travel, multi-verse travel, and space-less travel.

Ascension transformations occur at the ‘cellular level’, in the DNA, and deeper, at a sub-atomic level where electrons and protons circulate around the nucleus, much like a solar system, inextricably bound together in mutually affecting relationships. Starseeds refer to DNA often, for example my description of Petra releasing old patterns right down to the cellular level, and Mystreni noting that all life on earth with DNA is ultimately composed of extraterrestrial material. Whild writes:

The light inflow and energy cleansing is growing more intense by the day. The energies must be swept out to make way [sic] for the laying in of new patterns, and the structure of the fifth dimensional matrix. On a personal level, every soul standing on this planet is receiving a daily quotient that is in excess of their usual comfort zone. Very simply, the light is flooding into our sphere of reality from the Ascension pool, and in controlled bursts from Helios, the Great central sun. As it enters our current matrix, it has three layers to work through, third, fourth and fifth dimension, and this is becoming a bit chaotic for souls receiving the bursts. The result is the ‘Ascension symptoms’ that have become very much a point of focus. This is now a full reality as the physical body is indeed changing on a cellular level.²⁷

The Ascension, as Starseeds define it, is the embodiment of the 5th dimension, whereby one draws the 5th dimensional energies into one’s state of Being, and becomes, on Earth, a 5th dimensional being in a 5th dimensional reality. On the *in5D* website, Romeo Baron writes, “Ascension is the integration of spirit and matter. It is the process where our physical, emotional, mental, and all spiritual bodies combine to create a Fully conscious being. We take on the Lightbody experiment. We receive cosmic energies that increase the frequency of the Lightbody to carry more etheric energy”²⁸ (2016). As Appendix 2 I have included an illustrative Starseed page explaining the Fifth Dimension and the Ascension, as well as some comments from responding Starseeds, so the reader can gain a direct and tangible experience of the Starseed worldview.

My participants themselves have been undergoing shifts and changes, feeling themselves to be at times overwhelmed by Ascension symptoms. As the Ascension entails a complete overhaul of the human being to the cellular level, many factors are affected. Emotional upheavals may be experienced whereby old wounds and hurts resurface, or one might feel bouts of giddiness and strange disorientating out-of-body sensations, or feel thoroughly exhausted and need lots of sleep, whilst the body undergoes the ‘huge upgrades’ that Starseeds feel they are experiencing. These are all necessary transitions to ‘upgrade’ the whole system - body, mind, heart and spirit - to a better,

²⁷ <http://www.timwhild.com/2014/02/>.

²⁸ <http://in5d.com/a-new-species-is-being-born/>.

newer form. For example, when I first met Narelle after not seeing her for some time (our daughters were friends in school), it seemed very fortuitous to meet a Starseed first of all, but also because almost the first words out of her mouth were “oh my goodness, I’ve been going through so many shifts. It’s happening, it really is happening now, and I am really feeling it”. Narelle posts regularly on *Facebook* about her experiences of the Ascension, and she welcomes every ‘advancement’ she feels in her body as she adjusts to the Ascension energies.

For Whild, to be Ascended means to be a soul master, to have a mastery over the energies, and not to be reacting from one’s old programming and beliefs. Kusel reiterates, “If you truly wish to attain Mastery in any degree, you have to apply yourself diligently at mastering yourself first of all” (*Facebook*, March 2017). The Ascension is a foregone outcome according to Whild and everything on Earth is undergoing rapid changes, though some people are more aware of this happening than others. According to Whild, the Ascension has been happening since 2012 and has been undergoing progressions and stages, a process that is necessary for the human body to adapt slowly and transmute the higher energies. He predicts that the Ascension will be complete by 2032 where we will all be 5th dimensional light-beings. When we have ascended, we will continue growing and learning but at a higher vibrational level. From Jenny Shiltz quoting Sananda:

Ascension does not mean that one is done learning. It simply means that you have transcended duality and see the beauty in the process. As each of you move through the dimensions, there is still much learning that will take place as you merge more completely with your highest aspect. You can consider it as getting your college degree. It is learning, but from a higher perspective (2015).²⁹

Whild does differ from other Starseeds who believe that the Ascension will occur to the select few who put in the hard work, and that those who ascend will live in a 5th dimensional reality whilst everyone else will continue living in the illusory construct of the 3D Matrix.

The Pantheon(?) of the Starseeds:

A Starseed has a soul and a higher self, not separate to each other, but rather aspects of the same Being. The higher self possesses greater understanding and is connected to higher states of awareness. The higher self is said to dwell in the 5th dimension as well as other higher realms, and Starseeds often say that are listening to or *tuning in* to their higher selves. Starseeds also have spirit guides, and may have contact and relationships with Judeo-Christian angels and archangels. Also within this pantheon, are references to Quan Yin, Ra, Buddha, Jesus, Mother Mary, and many more, who are considered to be ascended Masters and light beings carrying their own particular energy imprint, knowledge and guidance. Starseeds also recognise the ‘elementals’ which are earth-based

²⁹ <https://channelingthemasters.org/2015/07/16/upcoming-changes-sananda-7-16-15/>.

spirits found in trees and rocks, plants and natural features, as well as dragons, unicorns and fairies. There is also a belief in chakras but these have transformed from the usual seven to twelve chakras. John Mack in writing of his clients states; "Once the separateness of consciousness from the body is grasped, other kinds of 'transpersonal' experiences become possible; identification of consciousness with virtually endless kinds of beings and entities through space/time and beyond often occurs" (1994:76), which is an interesting way to view the complex and densely populated Starseed pantheon. The ultimate Godhead is Source, the source of everything, so vast and great that we could not possibly imagine its dimensions nor understand it completely. Generally, the term 'God' is not used by Starseeds as they view it is a corrupted term, laden with historical and political angst, terror and oppression. As Heelas affirms in his discussions on the New Age movement, for practitioners it becomes an imperative to find "liberation from restrictive traditions and dependency structures" (1996:37), and Starseeds consider many of our current societal structures such as religion and 'God' outdated and redundant concepts.

Furthermore, Starseeds believe that:

There are also other light beings from other star systems. The Ashtar Council or Command is: an etheric group of extraterrestrials, angels and lightbeings and millions of "starships" working as coordinators of the activities of the spacefleet over the western hemisphere. Under the spiritual guidance of Sananda (the Most Radiant One), the ascended master who walked the Earth incarnated as Jesus the Christ, Ashtar, the commander of the galactic fleet and representative for the Universal Council of the Confederation of Planets, is currently engaged in Earth's ascension-process (n/d).³⁰

Further to this:

There are 144,000 lightworkers called Eagles connected to the Command. That is the minimum of souls required for the ascension process. They serve like cosmic midwives in the ascension process; the birthing of humanity from dense-physical into physical-etheric bodies of Light, capable of ascending with the Earth into the fifth dimension. Lightwork is incorporating Jesus' message of Love and Light into our daily lives, ultimately connecting with our Higher-Self (*ibid* n/d).

One can determine from the Ashtar Command statements above that there is a strong and indelible link to Christian theology. The number 144,000 appears in Revelations 7.4: "Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel" (n/d).³¹ Jesus, according to Starseeds, has a number of guises; Christ, Sananda, and Ashtar the head of the galactic command. And

³⁰ <http://www.upcim.org/ashtarcommand.html>.

³¹ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%207>.

similar to the second coming of Christ, they believe he is an active participant of the Ascension: “It is true, no one knows the EXACT time... that does not mean we are not being guided as to when the second coming of Jesus (his new name is Sananda) will be. The second coming of Christ is actually a return to Christ consciousness ... however Sananda will be coming back to help out” (2016).³²

The Reptilian Influence on the World:

Neo Bluestar is an avid believer in the Ascension, who often posts on *Facebook* about themes along these lines. He particularly dislikes and despairs at the overarching corruption and money-driven ideologies of the modern neoliberal western culture. He attributes much of the world’s ills to negative alien forces, and looks forward to the day when ‘they’, the good guys arrive. For example, in a *Facebook* post on 15th May, 2016, he wrote:

When the shift in global consciousness finally ascends to our true star being nature..sacred/gift economy will replace the Babylonian money magic system, perpetuated by the unseen negative energies, definitively known as the Archons, and their minions; the illuminati. Then and only then, will this planet know peace and balance ♡~}:

The belief in a negative reptilian force is perhaps an unsurprising one given the Judeo-Christian themes within the Starseed worldview. Partridge makes a wry observation in his study of ufological NRMs that “[t]he space gods may be Theosophical, but the space demons are Christian” (2004:175), which applies to Starseeds.

Much like other spiritual or religious groups, there are variations and degrees with which Starseeds are involved in or affected by what one might term ‘dark energies’. Most of my respondents, as well as Whild and Kusel, tended to focus on ‘lighter’ topics and the Ascension, and when I pressed Whild on the subject of reptilian aliens for example, he commented sagely that “they too are seeking divine love” and did not want to engage with this subject further. By contrast, my friend Petra was actively engaged with the dark side, aiming to dispel entities and battle them for her clients and friends. She saw this as her mission, and that by helping people “get rid of their shit” she was aiding the Ascension. Petra would often be up to the early hours of the morning undergoing what she called ‘energetic clearings’ and shielding herself from attacks from etheric beings. While there are several dark agents that Starseeds might face, the most commonly referenced ones are the Archons or Annunaki, said to be reptoid in appearance, cold and heartless, and who primarily influence us from the 4th dimension through the medium of the mind.

³² <http://www.indianinthemachine.com/2016/03/08/expect-jesus-soon-in-2016-armies-are-gathering-near-armedgeddon-second-coming-of-jesus-sananda-to-occur-in-2016-between-armedgeddon-and-third-wave-of-ascension/>.

Starseeds would agree with philosopher Wendy Hamblett's statement that evil is "the irrational inexplicable" (2014:12). In this section, I address the dark, reptilian aliens as Starseeds see them, but I pursue this subject further with more broad analysis in the 3D Matrix section of Chapter Four. In my questionnaire, I ask two related questions regarding beliefs about reptilian control and the concept of evil in the Starseed worldview. In response to the question ***Reptilian control?*** Mystreni wrote: "If people only knew - hence the flouride, GMO's, etc. . . ugh!" To the same question, Clayton Popa answered:

I do feel that this is big in today's society, in fact after one of my healing sessions I was told that they had removed a reptilian that was attached to me. This was the time I was doing drugs and I can specifically remember the event of when I saw the reptilian come down from the clouds. I also remember waking up the next day and felt something stuck within my throat that no X-ray could see. This is a real situation and is currently happening on earth today.

Whereas Stargazing Angel replied, "Not sure about this. Possible." When I asked Stargazing Angel about this later, writing to her that 'some people believe these beings control the government etc', she wrote, "Oh, I do believe that". She had meant that 'reptoid' influence upon her own life was nil or negligible. The most interesting answer to this question came from Diana, a later respondent with whom I had several *Facebook* conversations. She commented that "Apparently they are the bad guys, but I have had a very emotional encounter with one..loving, so they can't be all bad". Diana revealed to me that she had an ongoing relationship with a reptilian entity for a few years now, and it was a positive rather than terrible one, although she was attempting to extricate herself from his influence. Diana was also enrolled in an anthropology course and seeking a research grant to, as she put it, "prove that aliens exist".

To my other related question, ***Is there a notion or concept of evil in your worldview? Who or what is this and how does it manifest itself?***, Clayton answered:

Haha you make me laugh with this question. Evil is the product of greed and power as it has been for many years. To be honest the world needs a balance to create harmony. The only difference is that the world has allowed itself to conjure this so-called evil into a demonic state and manipulative structure for purposes of pure hatred and disaster. The term negative or dark energy better suits this purpose. It arises because for so long the world has been asleep and it has been able to hold the reins over society. You see as an empath I can feel the negative energy of people and places and you can not like something or someone just by walking past them. Most times they try and find you because you shine a brighter light and they want that or to just be a pest and annoy you. This topic of evil cannot be just merely linked to the unseen it also can be linked to human nature, greed, power, money, lust, envy,

sympathy all the things that make people crazy. It is this fact that big businesses and corporations can manipulate people by attacking these emotions and fears to control them, that to me is more evil than saying there is a devil in hell.

Stargazing Angel wrote, “Yes. All evil stems from a sense of separation from others and therefore God. However, the light of love always wins against evil. Fear is the opposite of love and light and fear feeds evil.” Whereas Diana answered, “I believe that all there truly is, is love, and that ‘evil’ only exists in this ‘game’ of duality”.

Reptoid Hypothesis:

One of the most significant proponents of what Tyson Lewis and Richard Kahn (2005) call the Reptoid Hypothesis is David Icke, and they write that “Icke is representative of a major counter-cultural trend that is indeed global in proportions”. Lewis and Kahn cite statistics attesting to Icke’s popularity, such as “Icke’s web page purportedly received over 600,000 hits in its first year alone, and for over four years he has been invited to lecture in at least 25 countries” and that his publication *The Biggest Secret* (1999) has had “six re-printings since its release date” (2005:45). As Lewis and Kahn wrote their article in 2005, one might speculate that these figures have grown since then. As a quick aside, and reaffirming my own realisations in the process of researching this thesis, Lewis and Kahn also state that “the demographic breakdown of his audience is, in and of itself, an interesting phenomenon. Icke appeals equally to bohemian hipsters and right-wing reactionary fanatics” (2005:45), a particularly interesting factor in light of what I’ve noticed to be a consistent postmillennial breakdown of some of our categorisations, delineations, and boundaries.

Returning to the point at hand, the overarching narrative of reptilian control is that Reptilian aliens “seek the corruption of our planet and the minds and hearts of its inhabitants”³³ (Baron, 2016 *in5D.com*) by encouraging and instigating fear-based problems, angst and worry, and “perpetual wars with each other” “through divide and conquer principles”³⁴ (Prescott, 2015 *in5D.com*). “By assisting mankind in this egocentric task, the Reptilians gain more power through the ingestion of our evil/negative energy” (*ibid* Baron), and therefore are the beneficiaries of the discord on Earth. Starseeds see the Ascension as “literally the ticket ride out of that negative space” (*ibid* Baron). Infiltrating all our pillars of society and gaining control of banks, corporations, The World Bank, and stock markets, as well as the military, politics and government, and extending their influence into the media, health and education, the Annunaki through the Illuminati, have created a system whereby humans suffer (see Icke, 2001) and become disconnected to their inherent divinity. For Baron, “If we look at the world today, you look at the third dimension, you can see that humanity has lost its

³³ <http://in5d.com/the-reptilian-draconian-invasion-agenda/>.

³⁴ <http://in5d.com/anunnaki-are-malevolent-extraterrestrials-controlling-this-planet/>.

Humanity” and “[w]e are living in an anti-human structure. How did we let this happen and how are we allowing it to continue? This is not a Human agenda, it is an alien negative agenda” (*ibid*).

Starseeds believe that the media and electro-magnetic technologies are the primary tools of reptilian mind-control over people, for the purpose of “domination and enslavement” “that benefits [a] small privileged (elite) few” (*ibid* Baron). Although some movies and television programmes can convey “keys and codes to help wake the population up” (KT Soulsong discussing Netflix series *The OA* and *Sense8*), popular media seeks to convince us of barren truths; those of consumerism, false political narratives and an overall subliminal message of fear and want. Baron writes, “It’s no wonder so many of us die with a broken heart, because our truth cannot be expressed in this realm” (*ibid*). Casting a view around the world with all its problems, social ills, wars, injustices, abuses and corruption, the Starseed who longs for peace and truth, and who has a deep *knowing* that Being in a higher dimensional divine state is a true form of *reality*, can only attribute such aberrant behaviour to the Other - in this case negative alien beings - as humans could not possibly inflict damage upon themselves to such an extraordinary degree, without false programming and misguided compulsion. Hamblett writes, “[e]vil offers empirical evidence of its existence in the suffering of innocents” (2009:3), and for the Starseed, evidence abounds for ‘evil’ in this world; the harm and injustices suffered through war, racism, bigotry, poverty, sexual discrimination, environmental damage and degradation, corporate domination and greed, and countless other social ills, all of which are felt keenly by the empathic and ‘sensitive-to-energy’ Starseed.

I agree with Lewis and Kahn that “Icke has tapped into the Utopian longings of the masses” and that “an increasingly dissatisfied and questioning public the world over have found something deeply provocative in Icke that cannot simply be explained away as manifestations of a collective false-consciousness, clinical paranoia, or, as Freud would say, group hypnosis” (2005:67). A few of my respondents believed that they have had direct experience of the Annunaki or Archons, have seen and felt them, and *know* them to be real. Neo Bluestar posted an article on *Facebook* by James Gilliland pertinent to this:

There is a *multidimensional* war going on, an unseen cleansing and healing of both the seen and unseen malevolent forces; which have enslaved humanity for eons ... Do you think you will hear about this in mainstream news? They are part of the Archon network. As the frequencies rise in Earth’s ascension those who cannot align with the new energies will fall. They are not frequency specific to the process and cannot adapt to the new energies. There shall be no rock left unturned. You are going to see just how dirty your leadership in every institution has become. Again, this has everything to do with the awakening and healing

process. You are going to see narcissism [sic] and arrogance to the extreme (Gilliland, *Cosmic News* 2016, my emphasis).³⁵

Another interesting and representative Starseed perspective on negative alien or other beings and their insidious influence upon us can be found on Bernhard Guenther's website, *Piercing the Veil of Reality*.³⁶

In my research with the Starseeds, I came to realise that the underlying basis for their belief in a negative alien agenda is their core belief that they are inherently divine 5th dimensional beings, in a world that is demonstrably not in tune with the divine. In other words, a Starseed cannot conceive that divine beings (as we humans are) could possibly perpetrate the ills and evil upon the world without being influenced by truly evil forces. This belief ties into their view of the 'system' or worldly structures such as the government, politics, schools, the military, money, banks and corporations, as purveyors and symptoms of the 3D Matrix, an illusory and false system that underpins our current societies. I examine the 3D Matrix as an ideological abstract of our worldly institutions in the next chapter.

³⁵ <http://www.cosmicnews.org/2016/09/25/james-gilliland/>.

³⁶ <https://veilofreality.com/>.

CHAPTER FOUR:

The 3D Matrix - A Reflection and Refraction of the Social Soup

After much discussion, debate, and research, the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2016 is *post-truth* – an adjective defined as ‘relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’.³⁷

Regardless of alternative facts, fake news or scientific censorship, nature tells the truth.³⁸

A Vertical Moment:

Did you feel (as I did) an epistemological shift when the results came in and Donald Trump became the US president-elect on the 9th of November 2016? I was struck by a strong feeling of what Starseeds call ‘dissonance’ - a feeling as though one’s inner measure of reality is not compatible with the evidence shown in one’s outer reality. Waleed and Scott’s discussion on the ABC Radio National programme *The Minefield* yesterday also alluded to this. They played an audio clip of *New York Times* senior reporters asking in shaky voices, “How could this happen? We fact-checked, we revealed all his lies and still he became president. Like, how did such a *scheister* get into the White House? It’s unbelievable”.³⁹

The 3D Matrix:

Following my position that Starseeds are responsive to, as well as a reflection of, the contemporary ‘social soup’, the ideological construct of the 3D Matrix is how Starseeds interpret and make sense of their outer world(s). In this chapter, I focus on how Starseeds interpret current postmillennial social, political, economic, and environmental conditions such as neoliberalism, the military-industrial complex, environmental decline, and the ‘post fact’ era of the Trump presidency as evidence of a hidden 3D Matrix. Similar to the themes within the 1999 movie *The Matrix*, Starseeds consider that much of the life that we lead is a matrix, a holographic delusion designed to numb the soul and oppress the masses. The 3D Matrix is to be understood as different to the lived 3rd dimensional reality that is in tune with nature, the body, the earth and stars, and human relationships. Rather, the 3D Matrix incorporates much of our social structures - government, the economy, politics,

³⁷ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016>.

³⁸ <http://beta.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-barnett-nature-alternative-facts-20170210-story.html>.

³⁹ http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2016/11/mld_20161117_1130.mp3.

religions, the military, banks and corporations, media and digitalia. In the words of Morpheus from *The Matrix*:

The Matrix is a system, Neo. That system is our enemy. But when you're inside, you look around, what do you see? Businessmen, teachers, lawyers, carpenters. The very minds of the people we are trying to save. But until we do, these people are still a part of that system and that makes them our enemy. You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged. And many of them are so inured, so hopelessly dependent on the system, that they will fight to protect it.

Jean Baudrillard, credited for providing the inspiration for *The Matrix*, writes in his classic work *Simulacra and Simulation*, "Now the whole of everyday political, social, historical, economic reality is incorporated into the simulative dimension of hyperrealism; we already live out the 'aesthetic' hallucination of reality" (1988:146), referring to the increasing mediatisation of modern lives where 'truth' was becoming a matter of representation, rather than 'real', an issue that is highly relevant in these 'post-fact', postmillennial times. For the Starseed, we are surrounded by the 3D Matrix, and one can live *in* it, or see the 3D Matrix for what it is and reject it. Starseeds see the 3D Matrix not only as an allegory, but rather as a literal holographic reality that can beguile the unwary into believing false 'truths'. Whilst it is an unreal reality, it is real enough to impact upon us all in tangible ways. Greed and fear are the tools and currency of the Matrix, conformity and control the religion, and outward appearances of success the holy grail. A Starseed is unimpressed by these superficial appearances of status, but rather sees the inner, tortured angst-driven soul that is chasing after empty, meaningless, soul-less goals.

I discuss an interpretation of postmillennial reality in Chapter Five, but it is interesting to note that theories around whether we can adequately answer questions of what 'reality' is, have arguably formed the core of philosophical thought since Plato (see for example works by Kant, Sartre, Nietzsche and more). For example, Nietzsche's 'perspectivism', "the idea there is no one objective way the world is, only perspectives on what the world is like"⁴⁰ can be juxtaposed upon the Starseed worldview, for whom perspectivism extends beyond the abstract into an epistemological 'truth'. An article by philosopher Nicholas Bostrom which I found via Starseed networks supports the Starseed belief in a 3D Matrix and demonstrates a conjunction between philosophy and science on this central question on reality. He asks "Are We Living in a Computer Simulation?" (2003), and argues that is not only possible but highly probable that we are indeed a result of some future civilisation's thought experiment. This theory has been echoed by brilliant tech developer/entrepreneur, and CEO of

⁴⁰ https://theconversation.com/the-post-truth-era-of-trump-is-just-what-nietzsche-predicted-69093?utm_content=buffer9c837&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer.

SpaceX, Tesla, and Paypal, Elon Musk's assertion that "there is only one in a billion's chance that we are not living in a computer simulation".⁴¹ Furthermore, eminent astrophysicist Neil de Grasse Tyson "put[s] the odds at 50/50 that our entire existence is a program on someone else's hard drive".⁴² (See also Solon 2016). Remembering the Starseed's fascination with science and their engagement and responsiveness to the social soup, one can account for the wide acceptance of the idea of an 'unreality' that Starseeds call the 3D Matrix within which its residents are completely unaware of the true nature of their circumstances (see also Haisch 2014).

Measuring the Zeitgeist in the Aftermath of the 2016 US Election:

For Starseeds the election of Donald Trump was perceived as a major 3D Matrix event. Trump's election shook the establishment and jolted many of different political stripes into the realisation that we had entered a new and wholly strange era, merging some key Starseed beliefs alongside non-Starseed assessments and social theory analysing the presidential result. Reading some of *The Guardian* headlines, such as "Neoliberalism: The Deep Story that Lies Beneath Donald Trump's Triumph" (Monbiot, 14 Nov. 2016) and "Goodbye American Neoliberalism. A New Era is Here" (West, 17 Nov. 2016), or an article in the *New Yorker*, 'The Anti-Elite, Post-Facts Worlds of Trump and Rousseau' (Mishra, 14 Nov. 2016), shows that attempts have been made to frame this somewhat startling event in terms of globalised social and economic parameters. Over the two weeks after Trumps' election, here in Australia almost every Radio National programme or ABC TV current affairs and news programme was devoted to analysing his triumph. Words and phrases emerged - 'post-truth', populism, alt-right, fascist, anti-establishment, anti-elitism - as commentators and academics tried to understand the facets and meaning of a Trump presidency, how and why it happened, what it predicted for the future, what it was telling us about the populace, and what this swing to populism and the far right, not only in the US but also in Europe and to a lesser extent here in Australia, was indicating.

Although shaken, Starseeds were nonetheless unsurprised by the event. There had been predictions that things were going to get seriously bad before they could get better, and Starseeds saw the election as the inevitable eruption and shift out of a seething corrupt mass of lies that comprises the 3D Matrix. There were many comments on his name and the portent of that, with some pointing to words and expressions such as 'trumpery' and 'trump card', and while they did not necessarily see Trump as evil in and of himself, they saw him as evidence of evil and a puppet of a shadow government in control of the system. Starseeds also foresee yet more dramatic and

⁴¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/elon-musk-ai-artificial-intelligence-computer-simulation-gaming-virtual-reality-a7060941.html>.

⁴² <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/are-we-living-in-a-computer-simulation/>.

unpleasant changes to occur which will shake off the shackles of deception and enable people to see life and the 3D Matrix for what it truly is. One of my respondents, Stargazing Angel, wrote in her blog, “Right now there's a massive purge of negativity going on. The Clinton supporters are angry, afraid and stunned. The Trump supporters are releasing the hate they have inside by attacking people different from them. All a purge”.⁴³ From her statements, one can surmise how Starseeds interpret outer events in terms of inner states of being. In line with Ascension themes, for Starseeds this political outcome acts as an indicator of a global release, a hard mirror to truly see the inner corruption that characterises the 3D Matrix. In my online chats with Stargazing Angel asking her how she felt about the presidential election she pointed me towards one of her favourite mediums and Starseed, Danielle Agnew who described the moment she realised Trump was to become president thusly:

It felt surreal, as if another dimension merged with ours, exactly in that moment, and took over. It felt alien. The energy was that of an interruption, invasion, a hostile takeover, a hijacking, happening moment to moment, right in front of me.⁴⁴

Perusing other Ascension and Starseed related pages, I found a number of references to maintaining focus on a space of love rather than fear in these tumultuous times. The following is from the 5D Healing *Facebook* page (November 10, 2016):

Either way the outcome today was going to be a strange day for humanity. A non-choice for the American people. A new timeline for humanity, reboot and rebalancing for Gaia and her passengers, this is all part of the awakening process. Let it play out, watch but avoid engaging. Blue pill people have made their choice, red pill people our role now, more than ever, is to stay positive, be mindful and connected to help raise the frequencies on planet earth. Hold tight beautiful people as the cosmic shakedown of our planet and the ruling elite continues. Rise above the polarity, the extremism and the fear. Mantra: I share love, I receive love, I am love. Namaste.

#breathe #begrounded #veilsarelifting #newearthtimeline#matrixmalfunction #reboothumanity #lovefrequency #recalibration#awakening #raisethevibrations #redpill #meditate #onelove

Note that the reference here to ‘blue pill’ and ‘red pill’ is from *The Matrix*, in which protagonist Neo gets asked by the character Morpheus to choose between the red pill and the blue. Taking the blue pill means he will go back to a life of blissful ignorance as he knows it, whereas with the red pill he will see life as it truly is, and it isn’t pretty:

⁴³ <https://www.stargazingangel.com/amazing-stories-blog/the-us-election-wth-happened>.

⁴⁴ <https://calltolight.org/2016/11/10/what-went-wrong-with-the-clinton-presidential-prediction/>.

Morpheus: This is your last chance. After this, there is no turning back. You take the blue pill - the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill ... and I show you how deep the rabbit-hole goes.

For the Starseed, the 'red pill' is immersion in Ascension energies and knowing, seeing, sensing reality as it truly is, and ultimately becoming aligned with 5th dimensional reality. Everyone else has swallowed the blue pill, and remains distracted from the truth of their divinity by the 3D Matrix.

Here is another example of a 5D Healing response on *Facebook* to the Trump election:

Something is happening. Can you feel it? Bigger than the US pantomime elections. More powerful than global economic meltdown. Greater than the secret space programme. Plasma waves, solar activity, super moons, Saturn changing colour... this is celestial, this change, this shift is occurring now. Upgrades, dna [sic] activation, dimensional frequency alignment. Its [sic] happening now friends. Be awake. Be in the now. Be aligned to aid this celestial cosmic wave, this quantum leap of our mind-body-soul system reboot. Meditate one love frequency. Much love, light and peace friends.

The goal of the Starseed is firstly to recognise the trap that is the 3D Matrix, and then to free themselves so that they can concentrate on more important things – the Ascension. “New Age thinking in general is characterized by a pervasive pattern of implicit or explicit culture criticism” (Hanegraaff 2000:291), and arguably, the same or very similar criticisms that Starseeds level at the 3D Matrix are found in current mainstream discourse critical of the ‘post-truth’ times we live in. The main difference is the reasoning behind the dysfunction of these structures. Whilst Starseeds see this in terms of shifts in dimensionalities, the ‘purging’ of corrupt energies, and the impact of negative alien entities who help shaped these structures, mainstream discourse views this more in terms of ‘human as fallible’ and in the form of social and political critique.

3D Politics and Economics:

The neo-liberal economisation and corporatisation of the world is a pet-hate of Starseeds, who see this as an insidious symptom of the corruption of human as divine. Again, they are not alone in their critique of our current socio-economic structures. Arguably, much current political discourse addresses the adverse effects of neo-liberalism and its practical impact on our lives, but also at a less concrete level - as a philosophy that pervades modern society such as the ‘economics is politics’ model (see Ha-Joon Chang 2002). Distinguished scholar and cultural critic Henry Giroux paints a grim picture post-election when he observes that “As market mentalities and moralities tighten their grip on all aspects of society, democratic institutions and public spheres are being downsized, if not altogether disappearing. As these institutions vanish - from public schools to health care centres - there is also a serious erosion of the discourses of community, justice, equality, public values, and the common

good”⁴⁵ (See also Street 2016). Starseeds would argue that this process of disintegration of ethics and values and the ‘common good’ has been happening for quite some time, and is only now becoming visible to people as they ‘wake up’. Giroux (*ibid*) laments the “consolidation of power by the corporate and financial elite” which “empties politics of any substance”, and again, Starseeds have been lamenting this for some time now, along with a number of other sectors in society who have felt marginalised economically and socially, or who have been concerned with the environmental impacts of unfettered irresponsible development that places economic success as their primary objective and disregards and discounts any environmental or social impacts of their actions.

Giroux (*ibid*) observes that with “the election of Donald Trump, the savagery of neoliberalism has been intensified with the emergence at the highest levels of power of a toxic mix of anti-intellectualism, religious fundamentalism, nativism, and a renewed notion of American exceptionalism”, which should strike fear into the hearts of any sane person. In a politiscape that has a plutocracy and elite at the top, earning fantastical incomes and wielding enormous political power, and on the lower socio-economic rungs a “precariat” that has “*no occupational identity or narrative to give to their lives*”, a situation that “creates existential insecurity” and loss of acquired rights, “cultural, civil, social, economic and political”⁴⁶ (Standing 2016, emphasis in original), I would argue that the exterior world, both directly and indirectly, that surrounds my subjects is one of uncertainty and “moving sand” (*ibid* Standing), and tainted, as Starseeds would see it by incomprehensibly amoral policies.

The rejection of government authority is not surprising to me (nor of course is this unique to Starseeds), given the current geo-political climate the world over, with (too) many instances of outright deception on the part the government, for example, the unmasking of the US government and National Security Agency policy of unconstitutional mass surveillance via Edward Snowden in 2013, the falsehood of George W Bush’s ‘war on terror’ and claims of weapons of mass destruction resulting in the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the dismantling of party politics in the US with the real spectre of Trump as the Commander-in-chief of the most powerful nation on earth which claims the right to use military force to ensure “uninhibited access to key markets, energy supplies, and strategic resources” and maintains huge military forces “to shape events that will affect our livelihood and our security” (Chomsky 2016:46, see also Pew Research Center⁴⁷). The links and interdependent relationships between all these factors - government lies and cover-ups, greed for oil and economic callousness, domination and control, and media collusion - is obvious for Starseeds. While these

⁴⁵ <https://www.counterpunch.org/2016/12/23/militant-hope-in-the-age-of-the-politics-of-the-disconnect/>.

⁴⁶ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/11/precariat-global-class-rise-of-populism/>.

⁴⁷ “US Politics and Policy – Beyond Distrust: How Americans View Their Government”. 23 November. <http://www.people-press.org/2015/11/23/beyond-distrust-how-americans-view-their-government/>.

examples are American, this unsettling feeling, mistrust and instability within the socio-political climate is repeated in many countries.

3D Media:

Starseeds have been and are continuously complaining about agenda driven misinformation found in mainstream media, and interestingly, recent debates about 'social bubbles' and the nature of the internet creating a one-eyed view of politics reinforces the Starseed position that the media is promulgating false narratives to keep people in fear. Recalling Starseed Romeo Baron's statement that the media and electromagnetic technologies are the primary tools of reptilian mind-control over people, for the purpose of "domination and enslavement" "that benefits [a] small privileged (elite) few" (Baron, *in5D.com*), Starseeds avoid what they call 'lamestream media' and have no faith nor belief that what is found in mainstream media has any basis in fact or reality.

The shortage of truth exemplified by the dearth of reliable media coverage that is not overtly or covertly sponsored by vested interests, including those considered to be 'neutral' and non-partisan, has been highlighted over recent years (e.g., Herman and Chomsky 1988, Bagdikian 2004), with Rupert Murdoch-owned Fox News for example leading the Republican conservative charge, or Murdoch's *The Australian* newspaper publishing opinion-led pieces masquerading as news for the Liberal Party. However, part of the shock for the left-side of politics was to realise that they too were part of the corporate machine with biases that are due to the fact that, as Timothy Bertrand observes, "major media outlets have a vested interest in catering to the financial concerns of their owners—a group of six conglomerates who control 90 percent of the media in America. This results in biased or incomplete information".⁴⁸

3D Angst:

Consider anthropologist David Graeber's statement written in 2011, "one thing overwhelming numbers of Americans do feel is that something is terribly wrong with their country, that its key institutions are controlled by an arrogant elite, that radical change of some kind is long since overdue. They're right. It's hard to imagine a political system so systematically corrupt - one where bribery, on every level, has been made completely legal. The outrage is appropriate".⁴⁹ While the mainstream may mock Starseeds for thinking that the world, including the media, is run by psychopaths influenced by negative alien forces, or dismiss some of their ideas as 'conspiracy', I would argue that their position (if not their reasoning) is an understandable response to the facts, and 'their outrage is appropriate'. The growing realisation that the prevalence of 'fake news' as well as biased media-coverage has

⁴⁸ http://reverbpress.com/features/bernie-sanders-was-right-media-blackout-badly-hurt-campaign-harvard-study-confirms/?fb_comment_id=1200630526634104_1235909869772836.

⁴⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/nov/15/occupy-anarchism-gift-democracy>.

become a serious threat to identifying what is *actual* versus what is agenda, are all consistent with the Starseed's definition of the 3D Matrix. Our post-human reality has been ushered in by current 'post-truth' accounts, manipulable digital realities, and corporatized, monetised vested interests promoting their own interests and agendas. With money being, as Graeber puts it, "so important to us that economists have become the high priests of our society"⁵⁰ for the Starseed, these are all symptomatic of a system designed only for the propagation of an agenda of untruth and deception. Their hope is that by understanding the very nature of these 3D Matrix systems, releasing themselves from and transmuting these realities is easier, and that this can be done simply by *remembering* one's true state of being - which is divine.

People across all industries, sectors and social spheres have become data, products, cogs-in-wheels of a machine without conscience or morality and whose only aim is to satisfy itself with profit margins and economic success - Baudrillard's nightmarish vision come true. Perhaps the terrifying meta-narrative of the 3D Matrix can be understood from Graeber's description of neo-liberalism: "The neoliberals ... are singing the praises of a global market that is, in fact, the single greatest and most *monolithic system* of measurement ever created, a totalizing system that would *subordinate everything—every object, every piece of land, every human capacity or relationship—on the planet to a single standard of value*" (2001: xi, my emphasis). As that 'single standard of value' is without Source, one can readily understand the Starseed aversion to the 'system'.

To offer another brief view from a different sector, critical commentators on higher education such as Marina Warner have bemoaned the corporatisation and neo-liberalisation of education, with the "robotic idiom" of "business-speak" "superimposing the imagery of the market on the idea of a university – through 'targets', 'benchmarks', time-charts, league tables, 'vision statements', 'content providers'". Warner goes so far as to evoke imagery of evil double-faced overlords when she writes, "The new masters in our places of learning hold the barbed poison behind their backs, ready to whip it out, while the honeycomb drips with promises of advancement on condition of compliance"⁵¹. Here, it is as if Warner is speaking Starseed language. Whilst ethics and behaviour theorists Adams and Balfour have identified what they term "administrative evil" which they see as "a phenomenon of the culture of technical rationality" that hides its lack of ethics and morality by "wearing a mask" (2015:7), Graeber calls the reduction of everything to "preconceived or statistical formulae" as the result of "bureaucratic procedure" that ignores "all the subtleties of real social existence" "structural violence" (2012:119).

⁵⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2011/dec/16/note-worthy-new-money-graeber>.

⁵¹ <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n06/marina-warner/learning-my-lesson>.

In response to my question ***What are your greatest concerns? Please write something about the items in this list that you are engaged with in any way such as practically or emotionally,***

Mystreni wrote:

- a) Environment? Fluoride in our drinking water, GMO's, and Chemtrails
- b) Political landscape? Corrupted, and dysfunctional, but ending very soon (globally).
- c) Media? No longer any integrity, and or validity.
- d) Corruption? Distractions like: tv, cellies, etc., are the thriving enablers.

In response to the same question, Stargazing Angel wrote:

- a) Environment? I've always been concerned over our environment. For too long, humans have used and abused Mother Earth. She will only take so much and she will push back.
- b) Political landscape? A total mess ☺.
- c) Media? False.
- d) Corruption? Rampant.

To demonstrate a Starseed position on the medical system, Narelle Whitedove described via *Facebook* how she saw her visit to the local hospital in the early hours of the morning when she was experiencing severe pain due to a prolapsed uterus:

This morning after s rather day n night to the wee hour of the morning..
 freedom deep in my soul as I walked out of Cairns Base Emergency..
 my reasons are many..
 you see I went there to ask for a couple of days rest n recharge...
 nearly 5 hours at Smithfield Medical Centre.. waiting to be seen..
 the whole time I'm asked we can offer you painkillers..
 paramedics picked me journey to Cairns Base Emergency... got straight in..
 Again asked we can offer you medication for pain n this will help you mentally...
 as I'm laying there cuddling chatting to my amazing son...
 again heart monitor temperature n more nurses asking me for pain relief
 This is the moment I stood my ground surrounded by nurses a doctor talking about me..
 the doctor said.. But this patient refuses medication..
 Me.. Hello excuse me exactly..
 I have no interest in being numb to my body n healing..
 then all broke loose..
 I sat up as the doctor approached me..
 we can no longer do anything for you
 ME.. so I confronted the doctor ahhh you mean because I won't take the drugs..

doctor.. no I didn't say that.

ME.. do you enjoy jabbing people with toxic compounds..

working in a corrupt system keeping people sick..

Dr.. again we cannot do anything for you..

ME.. as I gathered my stuff feeling so out of it lost my purse in the process to be found again..

Left Cairns Base Emergency with a Mission..

I listened to people being vaccinated being told don't forget to come in for your next one..

a beautiful 4 year old girl screaming while there vaccinating her..

again asking the mother are you up to date..

All these systems Corruption with a capital C along with coercion...

When are we going STAND TOGETHER..

T I M E IS NOW!!!!

I'm home resting for couple of days til I feel strong n grounded enough..

look forward to giving Arjuna cuddles

this has been a challenging time for us both..

I no longer stay small...

We are amazing Multidimensional Beings.. having a Human Experience..

Love n Gratitude

Narelle Whitedove xx

With regard to their attitude towards the established health system, Starseeds also reject vaccinations because they are comprised of a veritable cocktail of heavy metals and poisons, including mercury, formaldehyde, antibiotics, aluminium, Monosodium glutamate⁵² that is administered along with the vaccine. Starseeds have little faith in doctors and western medical systems that are controlled by big pharmaceutical companies chasing the almighty dollar (Braithwaite 1984), nor do they trust health insurance companies. If one believes, as Starseeds do, that the system is corrupted and that humans are enslaved by an amoral system that cares little for the human in humanity, then *everything* is called into question. Narelle questions the validity of the medical system, and my other respondents doubt that political systems, health systems, the media and most certainly not money-making ventures have any care for the human. I followed one of Neo Bluestar's shared posts on *Facebook* and found an article that illustrates the prevailing Starseed opinion on these points:

The status quo has lost all sight of honor, integrity, the God given rights of all humanity succumbing to unbridled greed, power over others and in many cases genocide. We are talking about being governed by pathological liars, thieves, and murderers. We are talking about

⁵² <http://www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/understanding-vaccines/goes-vaccine/>.

downright satanic, demonic and maniacal forces when you get down to the root of the matter. This is not conspiracy, it is fact and the condition of humanity and the Earth bears testimony to this. With all the wars, manmade diseases, tainted inoculations, cancerous chemicals in the food and water, extremely toxic chemtrails one has to ask how these inhumane things came to pass. *Non-humans do inhumane things* (my emphasis).⁵³

The 3D Matrix from the Perspective of the Human-in-Nature:

Bruno Latour, recognising the unprecedented place where the human-in-nature currently resides in regards to pressing environmental issues such as climate change, states in his Gifford Lectures on the Anthropocene that:

We have entered instead a completely new state of nature ... a war of all against all, in which the protagonists may now be not only wolf and sheep, but also tuna fish as well as CO2, sea levels, plant nodules or algae, in addition to the many different factions of fighting humans. The problem is that this state of nature is not situated ... in the mythical past before the social compact: it is coming at us; it is our present. Worse: if we are not inventive enough, it might be our future as well (Latour 2013:103).

Much like the themes of xenoanthropology where questions of the 'human as other' place new enquiries around the concept of human cohesiveness (is there a 'human' universality, an umbrella under which we all reside?), the Anthropocene epoch has brought one resounding factor into focus, and that is our shared vulnerability as 'earthbound' humans to the health of the planet. Our relationship to the material world has found greater emphasis and urgency, beyond mere philosophy or opposing political points of view, and if anything, accepting this basic truism - that we need clean air and water and vibrant ecosystems - should be a primary and fundamental descriptor of the *human being*. However, in this section, for the Starseed, decisions that affect Nature and hence the human-in-nature are all too often enmeshed in political machinations and complicity with the 3D Matrix agenda.

Following my themes of mutually affecting relationships between the exterior and interior, I would argue that social facts support Starseed themes of mistrust in the 3D Matrix to provide a healthy and safe environment to live in. The Starseed is usually very receptive to their outside circumstances, and feels strongly about having a peaceful, safe and clean environment. They also recognise their bodies as receptacles for messages from Source, and see disease, illness or stress as indicators of being disharmonious with one's environment. They are both embodied by and within their environment, and therefore believe that it is crucial to have peaceful surroundings, ideally natural and surrounded by trees, or the ocean, and blue skies. Interestingly these themes are echoed by John Mack in his work

⁵³ <https://www.cosmicnews.org/2016/09/25/james-gilliland/>.

with clients who claimed to have been abducted or has other kinds of direct alien experiences. He writes: “The result of all these experiences for abductees is the discovery of a new and altered sense of their place in the cosmic design, one that is more modest, respectful, and harmonious in relation to the earth and its living systems. Emotions of awe, respect for the mystery of nature, and a heightened sense of the sacredness of the natural world are experienced along with deep sadness about the apparent hopelessness of Earth’s environmental crisis” (1994:78).

From this perspective, a Starseed would ask, what kind of Being would willingly and knowingly manufacture products such as pesticides, that are found in “our schools, parks, and public lands and ... found in our air, our food, our soil, our water and even in our breast milk”.⁵⁴ It seems we have learned nothing from Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) where she exposed the detrimental effects of DDT on the ecological health of the environment. Carson demonstrated the precariously fine balance of life between creatures and flora, great and small, where every component was necessary for a thriving ecology, yet this balance of nature of which we are also a member is being subverted and plundered for corporate interests, in scenes replayed the world over.

Starseeds believe the 3D Matrix has invaded many spaces including our physical life with chemicals in our water, weather control via chemtrails (contrails exuded from aeroplanes), inorganic pesticides, herbicides and GMO crops propagated by “agriculture giant” Monsanto that “delivered the pesticide ‘Agent Orange’ to the US military in the Vietnam war” with “close connections with the central power in Washington, with tough people from the field of the US secret services and with private security companies”.⁵⁵ Starseeds are concerned about the overreliance on fossil fuels, and one of its most insidious bi-products, plastic. Plastic pollution is overwhelmingly suffocating life as we know it, affecting groundwater and the food-chain, with plankton absorbing microplastics and toxins, additives such as BPAs and PVCs leaching their own toxins affecting habitats and ecosystems, and with plastic debris in the oceans outweighing “zooplankton by a ratio of 36-to-1”, not to mention the adverse effects on our health with exposure to plastics “linked to cancers, birth defects, impaired immunity, endocrine disruption and other ailments”.⁵⁶

Geoengineering:

An area that Starseeds are strongly engaged with is geoengineering and contrails which Starseeds call chemtrails (discussed further below). Neo posted consistently on this subject showing photos of ‘chemtrails’ in the sky above where he lives. Geoengineering has two faces, positive and negative. The positive face comes from science. This definition is from the University of Oxford

⁵⁴ <https://toxicsaction.org/issues/pesticides/>.

⁵⁵ <https://sustainablepulse.com/2013/07/13/the-sinister-monsanto-group-agent-orange-to-genetically-modified-corn/#.Wh8hTkqWac0>.

⁵⁶ <http://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org/the-movement/>.

Geoengineering Programme: “Geoengineering is the deliberate large-scale intervention in the Earth’s natural systems to counteract climate change” which in short employs three techniques – Solar Radiation Management to deflect a proportion of the Sun’s rays back out into the atmosphere, Carbon Dioxide removal which aims to reduce CO₂ through a number of measures including afforestation and ocean fertilisation (adding nutrients to the ocean to draw CO₂ from the atmosphere), and Enhanced Weathering which exposes large quantities of minerals “that will react with carbon dioxide in the atmosphere”.⁵⁷ The hope of geoengineering scientists is that “by deploying geoengineering we may be able to forestall these consequences and to protect critically vulnerable natural ecosystems such as the arctic, or coral reefs from damage that otherwise could no longer be avoided” (*ibid*).

From a 2012 ABC news article titled “Permanent Cloud-seeding Gets Green Light” it seems that geoengineering practices are in place in Australia, with the report stating that “The former Member for Monaro and Opposition spokesman for Primary Industries Steve Whan, says the plan to increase snowfalls will boost water flows and snow cover. ‘I moved a small amendment which the government accepted to ensure that if there are different elements used as the chemicals that they would be properly tested,’ he said. ‘It has now turned into a permanent feature of the winter in the Snowy Mountains’”.⁵⁸ Beyond Australia, in October 2017 *The Guardian* reported that “Earlier this year, David Keith, a professor of applied physics at Harvard announced plans to conduct an outdoor trial into stratospheric aerosol injection, involving launching a high-altitude balloon that will spray a small quantity of reflective particles into the stratosphere. Keith believes the experiment may help to measure the feasibility and risks involved in GE, an umbrella term for a range of techniques to deliberately adjust the climate in an effort to mitigate global warming”.⁵⁹

However, Starseeds see geoengineering quite differently. They see the manipulation of weather systems and the spraying of chemicals into the air to be aberrant behaviour that is poisoning people and detrimentally affecting the weather, causing droughts, tornadoes, and floods, as well as polluting the biosphere in a most unnatural, unhealthy way. From Dane Wigington, founder of *Geoengineering Watch.org*:

The list of catastrophic consequences being inflicted on our planet by the ongoing global climate engineering assault is unimaginably long and growing by the day. ‘Solar radiation management’ programs have long since been fully deployed. These completely unregulated climate engineering operations are for the specific purpose of blocking out the sun by using jet aircraft to spray highly toxic reflective heavy metals and chemicals into the atmosphere, what could go

⁵⁷ <http://www.geoengineering.ox.ac.uk/what-is-geoengineering/what-is-geoengineering/>.

⁵⁸ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-19/cloud-seeding/4322880>.

⁵⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/14/geoengineering-is-not-a-quick-fix-for-climate-change-experts-warn-trump>.

wrong? ... wreaking havoc with global weather patterns, destroying the ozone layer, and contaminating the entire biosphere.⁶⁰

While Starseed beliefs in chemtrails may appear to be irrational, one need not be a Starseed to be sympathetic to their fears about the reliability of science in collusion with ‘the system’ and question the idea that scientific decisions are infallible. We know of countless incidents where science has failed in its duty of care and made mistakes. Some quick examples include the introduction of the cane toad to Australia in 1935 or the use of Thalidomide in the late 1950s and early 1960s for the treatment of nausea in pregnant women (see Kim and Scialli 2011).

Furthermore, Starseeds are not alone in their mistrust of geoengineering. The same article in the *The Guardian* referred to above warned that geoengineering “is not a quick fix for climate change” and reported that “‘All the techniques being proposed have potentially severe environmental impacts,’ said Silvia Ribeiro of the ETC Group, leading campaign monitors of new technologies and their possible impact on the world’s poorest”. The ETC Group “opposes geoengineering and other false solutions to climate change (e.g., proprietary, genetically-engineered ‘climate-ready’ crops) and supports peasant-led agroecological responses to the climate crisis”.⁶¹ Referring again to the *The Guardian* article:

Concerns focus on techniques such as stratospheric aerosol injection, which some experts say has the potential to reduce the amount of rain from Asian and African monsoons and could have a devastating impact on the food supply of billions of people. Aerosol injection also has the potential to reduce the ozone layer and heighten the risk of exposure to ultraviolet radiation. Other possible side effects of GE may be an increase in ocean acidification, a change in weather patterns, a rapid rise in temperatures, and a huge uptake in the use of agricultural land, all of which could prompt mass migration of millions of climate change refugees.

Starseeds find this kind of interference with Nature to be abhorrent and symptomatic of the 3D Matrix. They would find some, if not resounding, agreement within non-Starseed circles about the state of our ecology and environment. The general consensus is that we have entered the Anthropocene, and our problems are “more than climate change; it’s also extraordinary burdens of toxic chemistry, mining, depletion of lakes and rivers under and above ground, ecosystem simplification, vast genocides of people and other critters, etc, etc, in systemically linked patterns that threaten major system collapse after major system collapse after major system collapse” (Harraway 2015:159). Starseeds perceive that geoengineering is another factor adding to our woes, which groups like Geoengineering Watch see as a form of domination and control as well as willing, conscious

⁶⁰ <http://www.geoengineeringwatch.org/climate-engineering-atmospheric-aerosols-are-blocking-the-sky-from-astronomers/>.

⁶¹ <http://www.etcgroup.org/issues/climate-geoengineering>.

destruction of the human-in-nature: “The military industrial complex is continuing to expand its power and its completely out of control experiments on Earth's life support systems. Global climate engineering programs are the epitome of the military industrial complex insanity and hubris”.⁶²

These examples highlight the main points that Starseeds have against the ‘system’ which are; a) the failure to recognise the interconnectivity between living systems which enables acts of almost criminal disregard for nature, which in turn adversely affects human well-being, and b) the separation of the human-in-nature from the human-as-mind through technology. Again, Mack’s analysis of his clients coincides with the Starseed worldview: Each appears to come out of his or her experiences concerned about the fate of the earth and the continuation of human and other life-forms. Virtually all the abductees with whom I have worked closely have demonstrated a commitment to changing their relationship to the earth, of living more gently on it or in greater harmony with the other creatures that live here. Each seems to be devoted to transforming his or her relationships with other people, to expressing love more openly, and transcending aggressive impulses” (1994:643-644).

Laughing Crow:

As indicated above, many Starseeds believe in the chemtrail conspiracy theory, which holds that long-lasting vapour trails left in the sky by high-flying aircraft consist of chemical or biological agents being secretly sprayed for diabolical climate-control or mind-control purposes. For example, a Starseed woman of interest in regards to this subject is Laughing Crow. Her website *Cosmic Dream*⁶³ (which she coded and built herself) has many articulately painful articles that merge these subjects together - 3D Matrix, Nature, alien control - and it is difficult when reading them not to feel her profound despair. In particular, Laughing Crow believes that chemtrails are the means by which we are being kept in the 3D Matrix. In an email to me, she wrote that “Stopping the chemtrails IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN DO ON THIS PLANET TO ESCAPE THE MATRIX. PERIOD. You can join Dane Wigington in his fight - he has helpers in Australia and New Zealand”. For Laughing Crow, “the most important thing we can do now is to be completely aware that they are using these chemtrails to mind-control us” - ‘they’ being reptoids or ‘The Controllers’ as she calls them, and that chemtrails are the primary tool used to subjugate humanity through the Matrix, hastening the destruction of the environment and our interrelationship with Nature.

Owning a farm that grows vegetables for 30 years she has seen weather changes and strange anomalies that from her perspective she can only make sense of as a result of geoengineering. On her website, she writes of the weather during her youth and the slow decline in the vibrancy of her land in Iowa:

⁶² <http://www.geoengineeringwatch.org/is-climate-engineering-contributing-to-noctilucent-cloud-formation/>.

⁶³ <http://www.cosmicdream.com/>.

One *knew* what season it was by the weather. Springs were warm and balmy—that not-too-hot, not-too-cold type of weather. The days were already filled with sunshine and big puffy clouds, and in the evenings we could sit out on the porch and feel that gentle and warm breeze welcoming the first of the southern air. Rain prepared the earth for growth, and when it was done, the sun came out again... Each year, the weather patterns became more and more bizarre. In 1994, I began keeping notebooks of weather data, which I still do... Land was over plowed, never crop-rotated, and the fields filled with more and more fertilizer and stronger and more lethal pesticides and herbicides. Monsanto became a household name. This, in my opinion, was the point of our Mother's first real death-pangs. Like a person who has been filled with too many antibiotics and toxic drugs, their body loses all its natural strength and immunity, which of course requires stronger and stronger doses of drugs ... Last year I had total crop loss in tomatoes. We just never got enough sunshine. Tomatoes need lots of sun. I used to be called 'The Tomato Lady' at farmers' markets because I produced the coolest tomatoes, and lots of them. For several years, I have barely been able to produce summer squash. I am not alone. That is a crop that is normally so prolific that one plant alone should produce volumes. People have said it is because of the declining bee population, but actually here, I'm good with bees. It is the sun. Sun brings forth life, and the chemtrails are blocking it, at least here in Ohio. But in other places on the planet, the ozone has been so destroyed that the sun is literally frying the earth ... Not to mention, of course that the air, soil, and water are so toxic now, between the chemtrails, Fukushima, and fracking, that the beneficial microorganisms can no longer survive. They are what breaks down the nutrients in soil to make it accessible to plants. How are we to grow food if the soil, water, and air are too contaminated to support growth.⁶⁴

Laughing Crow is of particular interest in this thesis because, like my other Starseed informants, she believes in an alien agenda and sees the Matrix as real and insidious. However, her views on this diverge from how I have been discussing the 3D Matrix with regards to Starseeds. In my earlier discussions, the 3D Matrix could be thought of as an abstract, false reality that some people fall into and are influenced by. There is nonetheless agency and choice between living in the 3D Matrix or not for most Starseeds, especially once *awakened*. Laughing Crow sees the Matrix as more real than real, and that we are so deep within the Matrix we have no idea how 'programmed' we are. She believes that some people even come with built-in programming designed to keep everyone else in the 3D Matrix, much like the Agent Smith characters in the film *The Matrix*: "These beings were no doubt made promises of wealth and power on this planet as they agreed to reincarnate, installed with these odious programs to keep all others in check - the ultimate Malware. We can spot many of these

⁶⁴ <http://www.cosmicdream.com/articlespages/deathofmother.html>.

beings easily - they run our governments, corporations, military, health-care organizations, and of course, the banks, stock markets and Federal Reserve. Those are the obvious ones".⁶⁵ Laughing Crow sees that The Controllers' aim is to eventually harness everybody into the Matrix, and she wrote "But even more frightening, is the fact that the ultimate goal of the Matrix is to turn us *all* into transhumans. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we are fighting this every day. The more aware we are of these implanted programs within us to dehumanize us, the more power we have to fight it. But I see many, many once good people who have succumbed" (emphasis in original). Laughing Crow's website also provides a link to an article by Mufidah Kassalias ("Writer, Photographer & Slow-Travelling Digital Nomad") which states that the 3D Matrix is "reprogramming everyone to think, feel and act as one; a single mass seeking external redemption from the chaos of the world. ... It shapes and reforms everyone into good, obedient citizens who are trained to conform to the prevailing Zeitgeist".⁶⁶

In their examination of Icke's reptoid hypothesis, Lewis and Kahn write "As transnational capitalism violently transforms the world in *opposition to ecologies of place*, the world stands in need of a massive transformation in a counter-direction (2005:68, my emphasis). The implication of this fits Laughing Crow's and other Starseed's beliefs, who are responding to the dire circumstances of the Anthropocene in which we find ourselves, wracked as Earth is with "starvation and deprivation" and "rape and [being] sold into prostitution".⁶⁷ As Laughing Crow sees it, "Everywhere I looked where 'nature' had previously been vibrant, all I saw was death. It is like looking at a person without an aura. Mother's aura had disappeared. Trees, grass, flowers - they were all there, but their spirit was not ... trees are now physically dying fast, toxic and invasive weeds have taken over where nature was previously in balance, and food production gets more and more difficult each year" (*ibid* Laughing Crow).

Lewis and Kahn also provide insight when they conclude that "theories such as Icke's can be utilized to point us in a direction in which the postmodern imagination envisions new co-constructed coalitions between humans and animals, and between culture and nature" (2005:67). This seems to be an underlying metanarrative of the reptoid hypothesis, that the lives and well-being of the human-in-nature are being threatened and disregarded for malevolent and depraved outcomes. Starseeds such as Laughing Crow believe that it's impossible for real *human* people to perpetrate such evil acts upon nature, and therefore they must be inhuman. With the Starseed notions of innate Oneness with all, their aims for peace and higher beingness along with their love of Nature and mother Earth, the reptoid hypothesis acts as an antithesis to all they believe in, and "evil" aligns with the "spectral Hades

⁶⁵ <http://www.cosmicdream.com/articlespages/chooseyourinsanity.html>.

⁶⁶ <http://glaringhypocrisy.com/matrix/>.

⁶⁷ <http://www.cosmicdream.com/articlespages/deathofmother.html>.

of a growing military-industrial complex purgatory framed by dire poverty and extinction of hell” (Lewis and Kahn 2005:68). Laughing Crow’s lament for us to “[y]earn to surround yourself with only that which makes your heart and soul soar and does no harm to the Earth or any other creature”⁶⁸ is a heartfelt reaction to the painful circumstances of people’s inhumanity and ill-treatment of nature.

The 3D Matrix as Domination:

A significant point that has been raised in this chapter is Wigington’s and Icke’s allusion to the military-industrial complex, and inherent in this idea is *control* over the populace. An article in *in5D* is representational of the Starseed belief that “the Forces of Dark upon this planet are interfering with the natural ascension and causing disharmony” through the mind-numbing hypnosis of television and the machinations of the media and political elite, and are “committed to a destructive plan to remove mankind from spirituality”⁶⁹, echoing Icke’s assertions that the media and internet are two powerful tools to achieve mind-control over the masses. Icke writes, “The Internet is an Illuminati creation and only exists because of military technology ... [I]t allows for the easiest possible surveillance of personal communications through e-mails, and the websites visited by individuals give the authorities the opportunity to build a personality and knowledge profile of everyone. It's about control” (2001:415). Foucault makes a salient point which can be related to this when he writes, “When an individual or social group succeeds in blocking a field of power relations, immobilizing them and preventing any reversibility of movement by economic, political, or military means, one is faced with what may be called a state of domination” (2000:283). Furthermore, the prevalence of digital surveillance promotes what Deleuze (1992) identifies as a new societal form - “the control society” - and it is through these rather Orwellian-tinted frameworks that Starseeds view the 3D Matrix.

Marx’s seminal position that “[a]ccumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, the torment of labour, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the opposite pole” (1990:799) still applies in the current era of neoliberal economics. The “robotizing capitalism [that] renders vast swathes of humans materially and psychologically insecure” (Harvey 2014:108), along with ‘anti-human’ technocratic environmental policies, insidious controlling mechanisms of surveillance via the internet, and the narrative of distrust in the media, politics and economic powers all conspire to render a totalitarian dystopian matrix of concepts - the 3D Matrix for Starseeds. Added to this foment is the ‘disembeddedness’, ‘fictiveness’, shifting boundaries, and unstable realities of digitalia.

⁶⁸ <http://www.cosmicdream.com/articlespages/breakingfreematrix.html>.

⁶⁹ <http://in5d.com/inconvenient-harvest/>.

Resist:

In 2017, the word 'resistance' often appeared across digitalia from the Standing Rock Water Protectors protests in North Dakota, with footage of military and police vehicles "brutalising unarmed people"⁷⁰ to the worldwide Women's March protesting the inauguration of Trump as president on January 23rd 2017, to the rogue social media pages of NASA, EPA and 'Alternative National Park Service' (see Twitter accounts @RogueNASA, @AltEPA, @NatParkSer as well as corresponding *Facebook* pages) that have been formed to sidestep White House social media gag orders. For the Starseed, the discontent and rebelliousness of our current 'now' is seen thus: "The energies coming to Earth are so powerful now that everything not of love is being pushed to the surface for healing" (Narelle Whitedove *Facebook*). And, the Starseed sees hope beyond the ruptures. Along-side Lewis and Kahn's position that current feelings of alienation and uncertainty point to a "post-modern narrative" that "contains within it a Utopian desire to reconfigure meaning within a discombobulated world where linearity, rationality, and causality have fallen into a postmodern black hole" (2005:56), the Starseed looks beyond Earth and notions of utopia, beyond the stars, beyond mundane outward appearances, to Source, and is certain that Ascension energies will raise us all up leaving the "perplexing cacophony of media simulations, cultural implosions, and political fluctuations" (*ibid*) of the 3D far behind.

⁷⁰ https://www.facebook.com/TYTpolitics/?hc_ref=NEWSFEED&fref=nf.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Digitalia as Ontology, and Interiority as Phenomenology

Therefore, technologies are not mediations, something in between us and another bit of the world. Rather, technologies are organs, full partners, in what Merleau-Ponty called 'infoldings of the flesh' (Harraway 2008:249).

A Vertical Moment:

Some of the movies that I've seen since I began my research have had themes that echo the ideas and theories contained within this thesis. I saw *Interstellar* (2014) when I began my master's and discussed this with my anthropology classmates because the protagonist enters the 5th dimension, which was the first time I had seen the concept of the 5th dimension outside of Starseeds. Then there was *Arrival* (2016) where a linguist is called in to help interpret the strange squiggly language of visiting aliens. I amused myself at the time with the thought that I was at the cinemas for 'research purposes' and cried when it was revealed that the aliens were here to help humankind - cue in the popular trope that aliens are benevolent and so much wiser than us. And on the new *Netflix Star Trek Discovery* series, xenoanthropologist and quantum physicist Michael Burnham and chief engineer Paul Stamets discuss the mycelial network "spanning the universe" like a "microscopic web", or an "intergalactic ecosystem" and as "an infinite number of roads leading everywhere".⁷¹ Stamets splutters as he tries to explain the complexity of the mycelial network, "at the quantum level there is no difference between biology and physics" (*Star Trek Discovery* 2017: Episode 3).

Light Language and the Superconsciousness:

I was often struck during my research by the cohesion and similarity of Starseed accounts happening at the same time. For example, one report appeared on *in5D.com* about a massive portal opening up that would bring about big changes in one's 'emotional body-consciousness' that would make one feel out-of-sorts, fearful, or discombobulated. Checking around, it seemed that everyone within the Starseed milieu was reporting similar accounts, and in some cases, some of my non-Starseed friends as well. I became highly interested in this seemingly linked congruity and found myself speculating whether there was *something happening* out there in space that was affecting us through laws of physics, and wondering whether occurrences such as sun-flares really did cause some effect upon us at a physical, cellular level, which is where Starseeds claim all ascension changes will occur. The digital world, i.e. digitalia, seemed the most likely medium through which this shared information was flowing, but this explanation did not fully account for the seeming inter-connectedness of

⁷¹ http://memory-alpha.wikia.com/wiki/Mycelial_network.

Starseed experiences. Among some of my Starseed friends and respondents, discussions would run along lines of “I have been feeling so wiped out these last few days”, and “I’ve been receiving massive downloads”, and these statements would be met with wide agreement and similar stories.

There seemed to be a network of hidden meaning that Starseeds are in tune with, that ‘normal’ explanations cannot account for, and this more than anything in my travels with Starseeds convinced me of their legitimacy as a grouping of people in *comunitas* (Turner 1974) identifiable through their ability to tap into ‘something’ inexplicable and receive the same message at the same time. A Starseed would call this tuning into the light-body consciousness, or the Superconsciousness, and while they have their individual journeys, and hence, individually applicable ‘messages’ from their higher selves, guides and ascended masters, the greater picture and the movements of energetic changes from *without* are from the same source; they are seemingly hearing the same song, feeling the same feelings and knowing with certitude the same message.

Along similar lines to my discussions of digitalia in this chapter, whereby ideas and concepts can be seen as strands of energy, information, data, criss-crossing the globe and encircling the world in a constantly fluctuating, pulsing web, so too, through the Superconsciousness, Starseeds see themselves as linked by an energetic light-grid. Like lights scattered across the globe, they feel themselves to be linking with one other and communicating through light language, which my respondent KT Soulsong described as a *feeling that cannot be translatable*, beyond the chatter of the mind and limits of words. As she wrote on her *Facebook* page Sacred Soul Speak:

It is the language of the soul. It holds keys of activation and encodement. It can be felt (but not always understood). It comes in infinite forms. It often presents as signs, symbolism & synchronicities which offer us valuable guidance every day. We are constantly conversing with light language, whether we're conscious of it or not. Light language is an interdimensional language that is understood by all on a soul level. Your heart speaks light language fluently. It speaks directly to your DNA, activating and decoding your vibrational signature as your Higher self activates the light language.

Digitalia:

Giving digital realities a name, an honorific - ‘digitalia’ - emphasises its ubiquitous and compelling presence in modern life as an ostensibly all-knowing, non-partisan, non-judgemental, conveyor of ideas and movement, and as a significant indicator of our societal identities and Durkheimian ‘social facts’ writ large. Our immersed, digital, globalised, media-soaked life feels like something more complex than ‘social facts’ and more like a ‘social soup’, thick with layers of relationships, interactions and ideas. Furthermore, digitalia is a worldview, a way of interpreting and

interacting with the world, and for digital natives especially, digitalia is a state of being, a means of self-identification, the main source of knowledge, and the primary medium of communication.

Positioning the Starseeds against the variable, mutable and changeable backdrop of digital realities, a correlation can be drawn between Starseed concepts of shifting and conceptual realities and their ideas of interconnections between each other, and 'everyday' digital interactions. By everyday digital interactions, I mean a person immersed in digital reality will zip from a text conversation with their friend in Hanoi, to a quick Skype 'hello' with their mother in England, to reading about the exploits of Trump in the US, or watching footage on *Facebook* about the DAPL protests, to their Twitter feed buzzing with every opinion under the sun, to checking the weather forecast on their smartphone, and to reading their astrology predictions, their favourite football team scores, and checking their work schedule, all before breakfast. This person experiences a whole gamut of emotions, a range of thoughts (their own and others, past references and present real-life questions like "will I need an umbrella today"?) all in a digital moment, and through a particular medium form - *digitalia* - along-with, arguably, their mind, or at the very least, with their mind as a conduit. And, this is a description of an 'average, normal' routine, not the digital life of a completely immersed gamer or virtual reality programmer, whose main plane of existence is within digitalia, and whose identity and values are inextricably entwined with their relationship with it.

There is a saying that 'Google is God' and Google does indeed know almost all about what is *out there*. Not, of course, our interiority. Or, is this a valid statement? Are these two perspectives so easily segregated when considering digitalia and our relationship to digitalia? Starseeds would argue that their exterior world and the 3rd dimension reflects their own individual interiority as well as the collective interiority of everyone. Arguably, a similar interrelationship can be theorised between our interiority and our relationship with digitalia. Digitalia is the canvas upon which societal wishes, thoughts, aims, interests, fears and complexes, is writ large or in binary code as one might have it. It is a mirror to ourselves in a way that no other medium to date has achieved. A mirror that is not necessarily our interiority but an outward expression of our interiority. It is the outer reflecting the inner, or as Tim Whild is fond of quoting (a reworking of the second Hermetic Kybalion principle) 'As above, so below, as within, so without'. The "interleaving" (Merleau-Ponty 1968:137-138) of the objective temporal Being with bodily subjectivity and interiority finds expression in digitalia, and the more I delved into the Starseed worldview and realised how phenomenologically engaged and responsive to the outer world and 'social soup' they are, the more it seemed that digitalia, or more specifically, the meta-narrative and conceptuality of digitalia was correlative to their worldview.

Researching Starseeds made me question how these abstract and mirrored realities such as digitalia affect their coexistence with their surroundings. One primary relationship that is affected is

the epistemological assessment of ‘what is real’ or ‘what is reality’? Sociologists, posthuman and digital anthropologists, and NRM theorists are in agreement that the question of ‘what is real’ is no longer the preoccupation of postmillennial thinking, but rather ‘how is it real to me’, ‘what meaning has this for me’? Hanegraaff’s description of a “new kind of esotericism that is rapidly developing and spreading” in present popular culture, which he defines as “‘fiction-based religion’ that both reflects *and* theorizes the rapidly dissolving boundary between ‘fiction’ and ‘reality’” (2016(a):256, emphasis in original) describes Starseeds in digitalia. And, by fiction-based, or to use Lambek’s ‘fictive worlds’ (2012), I do not think that for Starseeds that it is not *real*, but rather, referring to the ability of Starseeds to *determine* their own reality, create whatever they wish, be whomever they wish to be, and go wherever they want to go.

If you were for a moment, to conceptualise the infinitude of space, or imagine the layers, hubs and bursts of digital networks across the globe, you might also get a glimpse of Starseed epistemology; of timelessness, multi-verses, and multi-dimensionality. Digitalia and Starseed epistemological views of reality are both abstract and intangible in the material sense, and occupy an incorporeal space within consciousness and perception, whilst at the same time are both grounded by the medium of the body. Digitalia affects and influences the body’s cognitive perceptions in such a way that it is becoming increasingly a part of our self-identity and is becoming more ‘necessary’ to our daily lives, take for example the popular digital devices that measure one’s heart rate and the amount of steps one has taken in a day, and indeed “the digital, as all material culture, is more than a substrate; it is becoming a constitutive part of what makes us human” (Miller and Horst 2012:4).

It is this inter-relationship and Latourian ‘loops’ that is highly interesting; the posthuman world of information, digitalia, media, pop-culture, politics on TV, along with the Starseed multi-dimensional life of energy, shifts, portals and light-grids, versus the material body and the ways the body responds and engages with our fluctuating exterior and immaterial realities. I am not claiming in any definitive sense that the Starseed worldview developed because of digitalia, but I am saying that there is a correlative relationship between how non-Starseeds and Starseeds are responding to living within a reality and social soup comprised of many layers across vertical moments in time and non-time. Layers that are identifiably our own, some we share with others, some we traverse alone in the temporal and non-temporal, and across many other boundaries.

It is where this immateriality and immersiveness meets the phenomenological ‘body’ that correlates with the Starseed’s light-grid of communication (as well as the interconnectedness of digitalia). By reinterpreting Durkheim’s term ‘social facts’ into the term social soup to describe our postmillennial ‘outer world’ I hope to endue understanding of the Starseed epistemology. For rather than an intellectual strand of thought or a cultural proclivity, as the term ‘social facts’ seems to infer,

a social soup is dense, visceral with meaning and feeling, and comprised of many ingredients across many levels of engagement with the world. The idea of a social soup also seems more applicable in today's cross-pollinated world than in Durkheim's time where boundaries between nations, genders, and political ideologies were more profoundly demarcated. With the age of the internet and ideas, information, and concepts, the networks between present and past are being re-represented in a complex interwoven galaxy. At the same time, we are in a continuously renewing vertical moment - past, present and future - co-occurring through digitalia in this now moment.

Digitalia and Posthumanism:

Michael Lambek expresses the issues associated with locating new religions in current anthropological discourse in this way:

'Religion' once stood for the holistic worlds of pre- or non-modern societies rather than the relatively disembedded and encapsulated phenomena characteristic of modern states. Religion in this understanding is neither a particular institution or sensibility ... but a kind of ontology, a model of the world in its essence and model for existing in it and reasoning about it in a meaningful and ethical fashion; religions are the fictive (not fictitious) worlds in which people live and the techniques that render those worlds real and realizable.⁷²

This paragraph defines the parameters within which study of the Starseeds is situated, and points succinctly to the framing of Starseeds within the broader discourse, and within a postmillennial age. Older anthropological definitions are less able to completely grasp postmillennial realities that are being shaped by digitisation, by the fluidity of ideas and criss-crossing global communication and interaction, by the speed and rapidity of thoughts and integration of ideas, and by the intense media saturation within the daily lives of the average urbanised and westernised person. Lambek's word "disembeddedness" lends itself to mutability, instability and flexibility which is compatible with postmillennial life for many, with a veritable feast, if not a deluge of concepts, thoughts, worldviews flowing through networks of communication lines of the aptly named worldwide-web.

I believe it would be reasonable to assert, that posthuman theories and digitalia are co-conspirators and co-inhabitants from the same place in time, that is, our technologized and digitised world. Starseeds it seems, are thoroughly posthuman, or better said, a new religious response to the posthuman social soup. Pepperell, best known for his Post-Human Manifesto, affirms a basic Starseed premise, that "[h]uman bodies have no boundaries. No finite division can be drawn between the *environment, the body and the brain*. The human is identifiable, but not definable" (2005:178, my emphasis). The posthuman perspective is highly relevant to Starseeds living within the postmillennial social soup, as posthumanism acknowledges our current indeterminism, the 'disembeddedness' of

⁷² <http://aotcpres.com/articles/facing-religion-anthropology/>.

our postmillennial selves in the age of digitalia. For the Starseed, who is able to cross boundaries of perceptual realities, and who sees themselves as connected to every living thing, the stars, earth and planets, the posthuman position that ‘no finite division can be drawn between the environment, the body and the brain’ (*ibid*) marries well with their beliefs in being able to transcend their human and ‘bodied’ realities.

“[W]hen we “talk about posthumanism, we are not just talking about a thematic of the decentring of the human” writes posthuman theorist Wolfe (2009: xvi), and the notion of ‘decentring’ has arisen before in this thesis when I addressed xenoanthropological and astrotheological themes. Starseeds embody a non-human, incorporeal self-identity that enables them to ‘decentre’ themselves in a manner that seems to be indicative of living in digitalia and posthuman definitions of reality. Posthumanist theorists see that the human is “a *being sovereign of his own body*, demiurge, and *infinite re-creator of his own post-nature*” (Valera 2014:490, citing Sommaggio 2008, my emphasis) and I find the language of posthumanism significantly correlative here with how Starseeds frame themselves as creators of their own world(s). This particular formulation of the concept of being *sovereign* creators of one’s own world, is an oft-spoken mantra of the Starseed. Valera writes further, “In this perspective, the physical and psychological identity appears as a mutant entity, a *becoming* process, capable of *continuously updating* information assets” (2014:490, citing Sommaggio 2008, my emphasis), which falls very well into Starseed’s ability to ‘refresh’ themselves, release ‘old programming’, take in ‘new frequencies’ and adapt to higher energy influxes. Using computer terminology and thereby computer-related conceptualisations is typical of the Starseed.

Consider this moment in time described by Michelle Walling of *in5D.com*:

One of the most obvious recurring messages in my reality is that I am communicating with a parallel life I am having on a spaceship and/or on another planet. A large part of my consciousness is behind a computer control panel watching everything in my life and subtly communicating and making changes that will not break Universal Law. When observing me from without, I am simply light moving around on a computer screen amidst 1’s and 0’s. In order to see what I am really seeing down here in the video game, the remote viewing being has to see it through my eyes and sometimes join me in my body to do so.

Walling is describing a disassociation, a multi-dimensional state of being, where she is both viewer and viewed, and the viewer in this case is her higher dimensional self watching her moving around like bits on a computer screen, in a digital reality, a matrix. Starseeds will often use computer language to describe the processes of Ascension into the 5th dimension. They ‘download keys and codes’ to get rid of ‘old programming’ in order to ‘unplug’ from the system. This paragraph also points to Walling’s making sense of reality through a visualisation that has the medium of digitalia as the conduit for

understanding herself as separate to her Self. According to Seltin, posthumanist theories embrace “the symbiotic relationship between people and technology. As much as people create and determine technology, technology creates and determines people (2009:46), and Walling’s experience is a case-in-point.

Where Digitalia and Religion Meet:

Referring to Geertz’s definition of religion, digitalia fits the criteria very well: “(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations ... by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic” (1973:90). Further to this, if “the nature of the entity ‘religion’” is as Hanegraaff describes, “a reified imaginative formation” (2016(c):577), then does not digitalia fall under this definition as well? With “humanity’s remarkable capacity to reimpose normativity just as quickly as digital technologies create conditions for change” (Miller and Horst 2012:4), digitalia vis-à-vis religion via Starseeds’ worldview occupies a conceptual space in the abstract that is transformative and transcendent, immersive yet intangible, and “seem[s] uniquely realistic” for its participants (*ibid* Geertz). If we agree with Birnbacher’s definition of posthumanism as being “the next stage in a continued effort at *self-perfection* that has accompanied mankind from its very beginning” (2008:95-106, my emphasis) it seems to me that the Starseed quest to attain an authentic higher 5th dimensional reality (and all that this entails) is riding the crest of the posthumanist wave.

Social Soup/Strands/Networks:

Examining the Starseed belief in the Superconsciousness which is a place of Being that one can access to ‘know’ everything, I found there are many correlative theorisations across a number of disciplines - anthropology, psychology, IT and biology - that have sought to describe interconnections and interrelationships in terms of social and human cohesion. Recently, emerging out of the exponentially growing world of IT and the recognition that we are entering a new age of digital reality, there have been theories such as ‘The Global Brain’ which describes “a distributed self organizing planetary intelligence emerging from all people and information and communication technologies (ICT) connected via the Internet” (Last 2014:1). Founded on principles in the biological and evolutionary sciences, the global brain likens “collective human interaction to the collective interaction of neurons within the brain” (Last 2014:1-2). Cyberneticist Francis Heylighen proposes three features of the global brain, “Encyclopaedism - an entity with all world knowledge organized and accessible to all humans; Organicism - humanity as a super-organism in the process of building a technological nervous system and Emergentism - globalization as in the process of producing an emerging global consciousness” (Last 2014:2). One can see here that digitalia is the driving ideology,

but more interestingly, the global brain theory could be describing the Starseed light-grid of communication through the Superconsciousness.

Looking briefly at another theorisation of social networks, Deleuze and Guattari describe social communication and interaction thusly; “we are composed of lines ... or rather, bundles of lines” (2004: 223), or alternatively, ‘lines of flight’ and ‘lines of becoming’. While this description works for how digitalia might look like from the outside (if it were possible to map the lines of communication across the globe and over time), and also allows for the open-endedness of digital activities, it does not capture the immersiveness of the human-in-digitalia, nor the human engagement, feelings, and agency for the person in digitalia. Nor does it account for the simultaneously and mutually occurring sensations that Starseeds claim to *feel* and the light language they share. In other words, in terms of Starseeds, Deleuze and Guattari describe the lines of communication as if one is looking at them from the outside, but does not satisfy descriptions from the interior.

Repositioning the above discourse into the Starseed precept of ‘As within, so without’, there is, necessarily and demonstrably, an interrelationship between *non-Starseed* ‘mainstream’ theories and Starseed beliefs. The outer world and social soup affect the Starseed’s view of themselves as constituted Beings within their own realities. Starseeds *reimagine and reframe* events, ideas and concepts that are touted within the dominant discourse into their own worldview. They are a new religious response to outer realities, as demonstrated in the section on environmental narratives. Yet conversely, I see them as they see themselves, as *wayshowers* pointing out fallacies in the system, and plausibly demonstrating concepts that could conceivably become mainstream as science and societal worldviews reach consensus (along the lines of Richard Rorty’s (1979) position that reality as we know it is essentially defined by consensus).

Where Starseeds and Digitalia Part Ways:

In the first half of this chapter I have emphasised the symmetry between digitalia and Starseed worldviews as an ontological concept with regard to how they relate to reality. However, where digitalia and Starseeds are irreconcilable is that digitalia, ultimately, is reducible and finite. Starseeds by contrast, believe themselves to have access to the infinite, multi-dimensional ever-existing Source that imbues their and all lives with the most powerful energy source of all, love. Digitalia comprised of many bits and bytes, 1s and 0s that comprise this world and the matrix reality, is opposed to the real reality of feeling, goodness and divinity. A jaundiced view of digitalia could be described as “an empty and soulless world of mere simulacra, sentimental and mechanical mass-produced images that belittle and limit the divine powers of the mind, impoverished surrogates of what creativity really means” (Hanegraaff 2016(a):254), and whilst Starseeds enjoy the community, cohesion and communication that the internet provides, it is worth remembering their scepticism about the

medium which I discussed in the previous chapter. In the second half of this chapter I focus on interiority and phenomenology in the Starseed worldview.

Biocentrism – A Theoretical Bridge between Exteriority and Interiority:

Robert Lanza's theory of biocentrism articulates the relationship between one's interiority and 'consciousness' and one's temporal, physical exterior world and provides a theoretical link with the Starseed notion that the inner reflects the outer - 'As within, so without'. His principles of biocentrism outline and describe the basic epistemological tools of the Starseed, as well as their phenomenological engagement with their world(s). Lanza is a microbiologist and Chief Scientific Officer of the Astellas Institute for Regenerative Medicine, Adjunct Professor at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, and the author of *Biocentrism: How Life and Consciousness are the Keys to Understanding the True Nature of the Universe* (2009). His theory accounts for one component that is always missing in scientific theories on the origin of the universe, matter, and physical life as we know it - consciousness.

In answer to the perennial question, 'If a tree falls in the forest, does it make a sound?', Lanza writes, "*The external world and consciousness are correlative. A tree that falls in an empty forest creates only silent air pulses - tiny puffs of wind*" (2009:19-20, my emphasis). In other words, it requires the *ear* to register the puffs of wind, and *consciousness* to translate those into the human experience of 'sound'. Lanza reiterates Merleau-Ponty's 'primacy of perception' into less abstract terms, and describes in great detail the physical processes that are occurring to support his theory. The theory of biocentrism holds that human consciousness is at the centre of every act, event and idea, as exemplified in the first principle of biocentrism which states that "What we perceive as reality is a process that involves our consciousness" (*ibid* 23). Lanza's second principle of biocentrism is that "Our external and internal perceptions are inextricably intertwined. They are different sides of the same coin and cannot be separated" (*ibid* 39), and this description concisely articulates Starseed epistemology.

Starseed Interiority:

The way Starseeds respond to outer world events is quite unique in terms of the value they accord to these events. Everything that appears in the Starseed's reality is significant, from flooding events in the US, a sunbird building its nest on the veranda, an argument with a loved one, to the latest releases at the cinemas. They see themselves at the centre of their own conception as sovereign creators of their realities, and therefore 'take responsibility' for every event. For example, if a Starseed has discord with a family member, they will ask themselves what lessons the situation is imparting to them, or more concisely, what their higher self is trying to teach them. External events in the social soup are seen as signs and indicators of a greater narrative about the state of the earth and its citizens,

and the *feeling* which is the *message* that the Starseed gleans from these events, resonates with their journey through their own Ascension.

Consider this paragraph from Eliade:

The world stands displayed in such a manner that, in contemplating it, religious man discovers the many modalities of the sacred, and hence of being. Above all, the world exists, it is there, and it has structure; it is not a chaos but a cosmos, hence it presents itself as creation, as work of the gods. This divine work always preserves its quality of transparency, that is, it spontaneously reveals the many aspects of the sacred. The sky directly, “naturally” reveals the infinite distance, the transcendence of the deity. The earth too is transparent; it presents itself as universal mother and nurse. The cosmic rhythms manifest order, harmony, permanence, fecundity. The cosmos as a whole is an organism at once *real, living and sacred*” (1957:116-117, emphasis in original).

Eliade frames in this one paragraph a description of the Starseed worldview, that attributes what is external in the form of natural phenomena to the hierophantic realm of the sacred, as well as articulating what I see as the Starseed’s phenomenological relationship to and with their environment, which is “at once, real, living and sacred” (*ibid*). The phenomenologist’s position that the outer and objective cannot and does not exist without the inner and subjective viewpoint marries well with the Starseed worldview, along with their strong belief that they are the co-creators of their own world, and that the outer world, from mundane to emotional, political to social, is a direct reflection and result of inner qualities and one’s unconscious, sub-conscious and conscious beliefs. Eliade’s work and analysis is appealing when applied to Starseeds; their unflinching belief in their inherent divinity and relationship with the cosmos, and the “crepuscular” hours we are currently in before the “new paradisaal dawn” (Eliade 1971:128).

A Starseed resides in a continuously phenomenological and vertical moment, *without* and within their reality, which is a constitutional and relational intersubjectivity that Merleau-Ponty would describe as “conversion to reflection which leaves nothing but ideates, cogitata, or noemata subsisting before the pure subject” (1968:31). Hanegraaff observes similarly, “With this, we are led straight into the heart of a contemporary esoteric worldview based upon the post-Kantian notion that our phenomenal three-dimensional world is merely the reflection in our minds of a deeper reality of noumenal mystery” (Hanegraaff 2016(a):238). Added to this is the way that the Starseeds’ relationship to their reality is grounded in-to their bodies, and like a measuring instrument such as a barometer, their bodies are their main instrument of engagement, a body that reacts, exhibits, reveals and interprets data; they hear, feel, see, and know not only through their senses but also in an extra-sensory way, which they would describe as higher vibrational awareness, or communicating in ‘light

language'. For the Starseed, their physical body is an embodiment of the divine attuned to higher, sacred and multi-dimensional realities, and they "gain access to them through the intermediary of the body" (Merleau-Ponty 1968:31). For Starseeds, their bodies are not merely flesh and blood, but more akin to Merleau-Ponty's conception of "'Flesh'; not substance nor matter, nor a representation of the mind. Like water, air and fire, it is an 'element' of Being' an 'incarnate principle' of genesis and growth which is inexhaustible" (Han quoting Merleau-Ponty 2014:87).

Backed by quantum theory (see for example Krauss 2009), Starseeds further conceptualise their bodies, and indeed all matter in the 3rd 4th and 5th dimensions, to be composed of 'energy' and space. For a Starseed, thoughts and feelings are also comprised of energy, as too, everything in the temporal world. Furthermore, quantum science's recognition (and countless experiments to test this hypothesis) that any experiment and results are affected by the observer (commonly referred to as the observer effect), provides verification for the Starseed's belief that they are truly affecting their own realities, and there are many Starseed articles discussing this particular point. Linked to these, is the Starseed concept of non-time (that there is no such thing as time), which again follows quantum physics theories of cosmology and multiverses (see Biba (2010)⁷³, Wolchover (2015)⁷⁴, Zyga (2009)⁷⁵) and Loschmidt's reversibility paradox of entropy.

These scientific concepts of non-linear time, multiverses, and non-matter, all fit well into Starseed epistemology and collaborate with Starseed ideas of time and non-space travel, by which I mean travelling not in a literal sense, but through the light-body across all time-space dimensions, which reiterates again why *everything* in the Starseed's reality is significant. Starseeds believe that they can tune into the 'Superconsciousness', that is, the energy fields of the Divine. Judith Kusel claims that she taps into these fields and transmits "the energy records as held in the cosmic energy field". She further believes that "We are on the threshold of gaining conscious understanding that dimensions co-exist, and that it is a matter of tuning into the different frequency bands of all of life and existences. However, one can only tune into these via the soul - which is cosmic" and "I often find that when I need to use the higher soul self in my energy work ... that I can expand limitlessly. For that very moment, I can expand into the cosmic Being, I am in truth" (Facebook Oct 2016).

Stepping back and assessing the narrative, we see that Starseeds conceive of themselves as being at one with the energies, and the multiple levels and dimensions that exist; at the mundane level, one could be immersed in a negative state, like depression or anger, or one could be attuned to higher frequencies of divinity. In every case, the world within which they live is a reflection of their

⁷³ <https://www.wired.com/2010/02/what-is-time/>.

⁷⁴ <https://www.wired.com/2014/04/quantum-theory-flow-time>.

⁷⁵ <https://phys.org/news/2009-08-physicist-solution-arrow-of-time-paradox.html>.

inner state of being, and the issues that they pay attention to, or need to learn from, will appear in their lives; as Starseeds are fond of saying “Where energy flows, is where energy goes”. While Hanegraaff writes that practitioners believe that the true nature of reality is beyond most people’s comprehension, and “[w]hile we are capable of experiencing the ‘energies’ of ultimate or noumenal reality, its essence or true nature just cannot be understood in terms of our common Cartesian distinctions between mind and nature or spirit and matter” (2016(a):238), Starseeds believe themselves to have transcended these distinctions, and that they can indeed be understood.

Anthropologist Clara Han discusses an inter-subjectivity with one’s world and the relationships within it in a particularly succinct way relevant to Starseeds: “My relationship with this world ... is asking me to respond to the problem of the self’s *task* in making this world her own. Within this problem, the ‘truth’ of perception is not as proof of inherence in *the* world but rather as the *attentiveness* with which one lives in *a* world” (2014:86 emphasizes in original); note, ‘a’ world and not a categorical *the* world. From my understanding of Starseeds, ‘attentiveness’ or as Merleau-Ponty might term it “primacy of perception”, is an apt descriptor and applies to how they pay close attention to themselves, their bodies and the messages their bodies are telling them. By doing so, they ‘tune in’ to higher vibrational frequencies, which they both occupy and are occupied by, which results in the creation of a better 3rd dimensional reality as well as being better *tuned* and prepared for life in a 5th dimensional reality. I believe, to be able to relate to Starseed interiority, one requires a finely tuned and delicate understanding of those spaces, an ‘attentiveness’ to those ‘vertical moments’ that cut across shifting timelines and dimensions, and multiple actualisations and idealisations of self. Similarly, Tim Ingold writes, “To be sentient ... is to open up to a world, to yield to its embrace, and to resonate in one’s inner being to its illuminations and reverberations. Bathed in light, submerged in sound and rapt in feeling, the sentient body, at once both perceiver and producer, traces the paths of the world’s becoming in the very course of contributing to its ongoing renewal” (2011:11).

The interconnectedness of all things through *energy* can be understood in two perspectives; one from within, our personal self-awareness of our place in the world, our interiority, and two, the world’s connection with itself, the exteriority of our lives. Starseeds live in a continuously flexible relationship from the inner to the outer, and their “relationship to space is not that of a pure disembodied subject to a distant object but rather that of a being which dwells in space relating to its natural habitat” (Merleau-Ponty 1948:66). Or at the very least, this state of Being is the one which they are aiming to maintain or reach, where the inner and the outer are not mutually exclusive but a unified whole.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Reviewing my Research Questions

But I think that's exactly to me what science can provide is a realistic basis of understanding how artificial and myopic the definitions of us versus our enemies are. Not only are we made of the same things, we're made of their atoms. And every atom in our body was once inside a star that exploded; one of the most poetic things I know about the universe, that we're all stardust (Krauss 2013).

A Vertical Moment:

Being raised in Samoa, I spent a lot of time looking up at the stars. After clambering up a big mango tree, I would lie on the corrugated iron rooftop and look for the constellations that I especially liked, for example the Pleiades or Orion. Once, my best friend Moana (who also liked roof climbing) and I speculated that there might be another 'us' all the way out there, who was looking at Earth right that minute and wondering whether there was someone else existing 'out there'. Perhaps it was this existential moment that formed the kernel of my attraction to Starseeds, and although I never fully believed that I had an alien soul despite my 'soul-readings' from both Judith Kusel and my friend Petra, I still thoroughly enjoyed the moments where I let myself wonder 'What if?'

A Vertical Moment – From my Journal:

Early on in my research process and deeply immersed in the Starseed worldview, I wrote in my journal; "I've noticed that I am attempting to validate some of their concepts theoretically, such as the basis of all matter here on Earth being stardust and alien material, or the fact that iron comes from supernovas - iron is a primary component of our blood - which is amazing! If Starseeds are as they claim to be getting more conscious of the *immateriality* of matter, it's conceivable (?) that *sensing* that alien material falls within the bounds of a theoretical and conceptual understanding". Reviewing the literature and history of some Starseed beliefs however, brought me back with a thump to a more rational and balanced perspective. Somehow though, that process of extending one's beliefs existentially and imaginatively opens the door to possibility and wonder. This is the 'space' that Starseeds occupy.

Reviewing my Research Questions:

How did they *know* they were Starseeds, and what did that knowing feel like? Where is this knowing located, if anywhere? Linked to this are the questions; what is the Ascension and the 5th dimension?

My first research question, asking my Starseed friends how they knew they were Starseeds, only elicited a somewhat boring response - basically, "you just know you are". What has been quite

intriguing to me is the conviction of their beliefs - not in a manner of the proselytiser, nor the born-again, but with a quiet certitude that is convincingly earnest. My three 'real-world' Starseed friends have had 'encounters' with aliens, Lunar in England with crop circles, KT as she was driving across the Australian desert, and Narelle whose experiences I described in an earlier chapter, and therefore they were already open to the idea of aliens as real. Whilst these experiences explain in part their worldview, the crossover to the belief that they themselves have alien origins is an interesting transition. Is it as Roth frames it (from Chapter Two) a process of radical individualisation in response to sociocultural stressors, or is this change as described by Farnan's science-based cosmological visions due to the exponential rise of IT and posthuman ideologies of human self-perfection?

In the following example Mack describes how some of the alien abductees he talked to said they felt after travelling *to* their 'cosmic homes': "The abductees may actually experience themselves as returning to their cosmic source or 'Home,' an inexpressibly beautiful realm beyond, or not in, space/time as we know it. When this occurs during a hypnosis session, powerful, inexpressibly joyous, even orgiastic, feeling occurs. Conversely, abductees may weep with sadness when they experience having to leave their cosmic home, return to Earth and become embodied once again" (1994:75-76). While there are significant differences between alien abductees and Starseeds, such as that unlike the abductees, Starseeds believe the Ascension will be 'brought down' to Earth so that this 'beautiful realm' is a part of their normal reality, there are also significant similarities such as the feelings of joyousness and a return to one's true divine nature. Mack's use of the term 'embodied once again' is interesting as Starseeds frequently use the term embodiment to describe how they are bringing down higher Ascension energies through their bodies. In other words, they are transforming and 'earthing' this 'inexpressibly beautiful realm' of the beyond to the here and now. Reading Sagan's comments that "[t]he Platonists and their Christian successors held the peculiar notion that the Earth was tainted and somehow nasty, while the heavens_were perfect and divine" (1980:188) forms an underlying metanarrative in the Starseed worldview, but also arguably in other religious forms and in popular media tropes. Sagan continues with "[t]he fundamental idea that the Earth is a planet, that we are citizens of the Universe, was rejected and forgotten" (1980:188), and one might ask whether Starseeds and other space-oriented spiritual seekers are re-remembering this notion due to a realisation in the age of the Anthropocene of Earth's immeasurable value as well as discoveries in astroscience that are reorienting the human within the broad expanse of space.

Asking where this 'knowing' is located, I realised that this question is entirely subjective but it does raise some interesting points. For example, I am a born and raised Samoan, and my knowing that I am Samoan comes from my cultural background, my language, and now that I am living in Australia, the colour of my skin. For me, these are all measurable and obvious indicators. For the Starseed

however, without cultural/historical ties or even societal/national relationships, their Starseed 'identity' is based around firstly (and conversely) being human on Earth in relationship to the 'other' in outer space, and the 'other' un-awakened souls here on Earth (especially those who are doing harm to humans and Earth). Rather than my somewhat smaller self-identity linked to a string of islands in the South Pacific, the Starseed's (current) home is the globe situated in relationship to the broad spectrum of our solar system and beyond. One could reasonably argue that religions unite different people across many sociocultural, economic and political divides, yet often times religions adapt to the societal norms within which they are placed, for example the Sunni Islam that is practiced in Indonesia differs markedly from that in Turkey. Starseeds however seem united by the simple premise of being a Starseed human here on Earth; paradoxically it is their human-ness that unites them.

Secondly, being human means that one possesses a body vulnerable to the elements, in need of food, water and clean air, and I was often struck by the correspondence between themes of the Anthropocene or environmentalism and Starseed beliefs and perspectives. The main recurring theme in Starseed discussions regarding the human body however, is that it is emotional and responsive, reactive and intuitive. As discussed in the section describing the Starseed's phenomenological interiority, the *knowing* is felt in the body, sometimes subtly, and other times like jolts and bolts of realisation. Starseeds all over the world have described experiencing the Ascension through a range of symptoms including dizziness, unsteadiness, malaise, sluggishness, euphoria and seeing the world as glowing in light and colour. However, this 'knowing' manifests itself in many different ways and through multiple networks, impressions, signs and feelings. The key seems to be interpretation and resonance - how the self interprets these events; how something might resonate for you, but not necessarily for me.

The Ascension and Theosis:

As to the subsidiary questions, what is the Ascension and the 5th dimension, I can only hypothesise what they are, not having experienced these for myself. I have offered descriptions based on Starseed accounts, but no answers based on personal experience, although I have 'felt' things. Much like Carl Sagan's demonstration on the 3rd to 4th dimensions, having only a 3rd dimensional understanding of my surroundings described in Chapter Three, my epistemological tools are limited. Yet, how Starseeds describe the different dimensions and 'ascended' reality opens up many different paths to explore in a number of disciplines and philosophies including metaphysics, existentialism, quantum science and theology, and in particular I believe that there is a definite correlation and relationship between Ascension themes and theosis as both define the human as divine and in direct communion and integration with a Godhead.

It was intriguing to me that in spite of all the evidence that Starseeds cite to the contrary, they see humans as innately divine. Pursuing the ideology of theosis, I found theologian Vladimir Kharlamov (2009) who writes that while theosis or the belief in the human as divine was present in some form or another prior to this, it was in the late 5th and early 6th century that the Christian theologian and philosopher Pseudo-Dionysius first established theosis as a significant aspect of Christian theological studies. What was most interesting to me in my search for where the notion of an inherent divinity in the human emerged, was finding that the Ps-Dionysian influence extends from a 6th century anonymous, possibly-Athenian author into the 21st century, which seemed like a truly vertical moment across time into the present.

According to Mark Lamarre writing for the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "Presenting himself as Dionysius the Areopagite, the disciple of Paul mentioned in Acts 17:34", an unknown author, estimated to have been writing circa 500 C.E., played a significant role in mediating "a middle ground between the pagan esoteric cults [Hellenic Mysteries, Oriental Mystery cults (Mithraism, Attis), Hermetism, Greek alchemists (Zosimos)] and the popular state forms of religious worship", and merging "exoteric forms of Judeo-Christianity (popular Roman Catholic state religion) and esoteric Christianity (Gnosticism, Arianism, Docetism)".⁷⁶ The discovery that most of what Ps-Dionysius wrote about in his treatises could have been written by a Starseed outlining their fundamental beliefs or describing the Ascension, was revelatory for me. For example, in one of the major works attributed to Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, five of the thirteen chapters deal directly with ideas which are fundamental to Starseed beliefs. As summarised by Lamarre⁷⁷, these are:

Chapter 6: *Concerning "Life."* The transcendent, absolute, eternal nature of life is dealt with.

Chapter 7: *Concerning "Wisdom," "Mind," "Truth," "Faith."* The basis of a divine, transcendent wisdom where humans derive their intelligence and understanding through participation with the Divine Mind is discussed.

Chapter 8: *Concerning "Power," "Righteousness," "Salvation," "Redemption," and also inequality.* This chapter deals with the ordering of the universe according to divine laws by which a transcendent order maintains the dynamic harmony of all things.

Chapter 9: *Concerning greatness and smallness, sameness and difference, similarity and dissimilarity, rest, motion, equality.* It is shown how the fundamental unity of God can be seen in the multiplicity of the universe at the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels.

⁷⁶ <http://www.iep.utm.edu/pseudodi/>.

⁷⁷ <http://www.iep.utm.edu/pseudodi/>, my underlining.

Chapter 11: Concerning "Peace," and what is intended by "being itself," "power itself" and things said in this vein. The intelligent harmony which brings things together in a communion of concord is discussed.

It seems that the belief in human theosis that is both immanent and transcendent, with which Starseeds would wholeheartedly concur, is an enduring belief that is not limited to Starseeds, but also can be found across numerous Christian, Gnostic and Western esoteric traditions through many ages, and in the works of many influential thinkers from Thomas Aquinas to Meister Eckehart, or for example in *The Divine Comedy* of Dante, or works by William Blake, an extraordinary poet and mystic artist.

Starseeds also carry the soteriological flavour of Christianity into their current-day mission to help the earth through the Ascension, and their worldview finds correlation with Jesuit priest, palaeontologist and geologist Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who writes with more than a touch of the ecstatic and influence of Ps-Dionysius in *The Divine Milieu* (1965): "We live at the centre of the network of cosmic influences as we live at the heart of the human crowd or among the myriads of stars, without, alas, being aware of their immensity" (1965:58). It is the Starseed's mission to not only find this centre and tune in with this 'network of cosmic influences', but to help activate others into awakening. As one of Kusel's *Facebook* posts states, "When we reach a higher state of Being, a higher consciousness state, the ripple effect we have on the whole is of immense importance and value".

It is interesting to note the congruence between Christianity and futurist, transhumanist themes in Teilhard de Chardin's work which is touted as the forerunner to transhumanism due to his belief that the universe is evolving to a final Godlike state as articulated by his Omega Point Theory. As philosopher Eric Steinhart (2008) states:

Teilhard's writing likewise argues for the ethical application of technology in order to advance humanity beyond the limitations of natural biology. Teilhard explicitly argues for the use of both bio-technologies (e.g., genetic engineering) and intelligence technologies, and develops several other themes often found in transhumanist writings. He discusses the emergence of a global computation-communication system, and is said by some to have been the first to have envisioned the Internet (Kreisberg 1995). He advocates the development of an egalitarian global society. He was almost certainly the first to discuss the acceleration of technological progress to a kind of Singularity in which human intelligence will become super-intelligence. He discusses the spread of human intelligence into the universe and its amplification into a cosmic-intelligence.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ <http://jetpress.org/v20/steinhart.htm>.

These two strands of ideology - the Ascension and the posthuman transhuman - although different in their approach are nonetheless chasing the same goal, the idealised, Godlike human being with super powers beyond the mundane (see also Vicini, et al 2015). From Kusel on *Facebook*: "I firmly believe that in the next few years we will start developing a new science: the science of the SOUL. For the SOUL is pure energy and therefore can expand cosmically into much vaster energy fields, and it is here that the keys and codes of longevity are found, as well as the keys and codes of eternal life".

My Second Research Question Asked:

Are Starseeds representative of a technologized age, digitisation, and current social, political, and economic realities? Is there a relationship between popular culture, science fiction, scientific advancements, space travel, the internet and the formation of the Starseed worldview?

I believe my thesis demonstrates a plausible causal relationship between the age of the internet and digitalia as well as current social, political and economic realities with the Starseed worldview. At the very least, I have explained how Starseeds reframe outer events into their own belief system. I think there is a strong link between popular culture, science fiction, scientific advancements, space travel and the Starseed worldview, especially in regards to the social imaginary and the prevalence of fictive realities comprising postmillennial interpretations of reality. I see Starseeds' worldview as being consistent with our current times, and believe them to be a new religious response to events that currently dominate and define the western social soup.

Reviewing the Third Research Question; Quantum Equals Sociality?

What, if anything, does the Starseeds' worldview indicate for the social scientist about spiritual beliefs in the modern digitised, posthuman, postmillennial age?

Having established the historicity of the Starseed belief in theosis, I see the 'newness' in their belief system as deriving from modern and postmillennial influences, not least quantum science and particle physics. Distinguished physicist Lawrence Krauss' (2013) assertion that we are not only breathing in but are also comprised of atoms that may very well have belonged to and been breathed out by Julius Caesar, dinosaurs, and every natural thing throughout history is a compelling metaphor. Along with our elemental origins as stardust, conceptualising this intrinsic link between ourselves and every other living being, past and present, provides a beautiful theoretical perspective of how we are all interrelated, and links all of us in a truly physical sense to other people both past and present in a way that Starseeds understand and their beliefs exemplify. It also broadens the anthropological field to include all 'Earthbound' humans and their interrelationships with the past, present and future in a way that the Starseed concepts of multilayered space, time and dimensions encapsulate, as they live and exist in continuously fluctuating vertical time.

Further to this, developments in the hard sciences are opening up new conceptualisations of ‘reality’ and challenging our current-day definitions. A *New Scientist* article by British science writer Philip Ball titled “Consciously Quantum: How You Make Everything Real”⁷⁹ outlines the present-day conundrum nagging particle physicists, which is: *why and how the presence of an observer in quantum physics experiments affects the outcome*. Ball writes that physicists are now “contemplating a mind-boggling alternative: that a coherent description of reality, with all its quantum quirks, can arise from nothing more than random subjective experiences”, a similar position to the one outlined by Lanza’s principles of biocentrism discussed in Chapter Two. Without labouring the point, there is ample scientific evidence for the reasoning behind some Starseed definitions of reality in terms of consciousness and matter and the role of the subjective Being in determining reality. Starseeds themselves are regularly posting articles such as this as validation of their central premise that the self is responsible for its own worldview and hence perceived reality, and that everything in the temporal sense at its noumenal core is comprised of particles and waves of energy. In the words of professor of astronomy Adam Frank, “[w]ith its emphasis on probability waves, [and] essential uncertainties ... quantum mechanics ma[k]e[s] imagining the stuff of the world as classical bits of matter (or miniature billiard balls) all but impossible”.⁸⁰

In terms of my third research aim, Starseeds seem to riding the forefront on an ideological if not a paradigmatic shift, both in the ways that the ‘hard’ sciences are reconfiguring their categories and frames of reference (recalling from Chapter Two, mathematician Margaret Wertheim’s statement that she understood the peregrine falcon to be *embodying* abstract mathematical principles), but also within the social sciences. Reading articles such as Frank’s that questions the validity of a determinist ‘objective’ viewpoint in science, and states that “[p]utting the perceiving subject back into physics would seem to undermine the whole materialist perspective” (*ibid*) indicates to me that science is going through a shift which acknowledges that the tricky problem of consciousness in the material is still a mystery, but that its core is subjectively human. As Frank expresses it, “[r]ather than trying to sweep away the mystery of mind by attributing it to the mechanisms of matter, we must grapple with the intertwined nature of the two” (*ibid*). Are we presently undergoing a Kuhn-like (1962) paradigmatic shift?

Another excellent example of this ‘shift’ in understanding that I am speculating about in arenas where objectivity is usually lauded is described by writer and mathematician David Orrell in his article “Has the Time Come for a Quantum Revolution in Economics?” He describes the similarities in nature and behaviour between economics and quantum theory and argues that “[t]he point is not

⁷⁹ <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg23631510-200-consciously-quantum-how-you-make-everything-real/?cmpid=SOC|NSNS|2017>.

⁸⁰ <https://aeon.co/essays/materialism-alone-cannot-explain-the-riddle-of-consciousness>.

that quantum mechanics can be viewed as a metaphor for understanding money, but that the economy is a quantum system in its own right, with its own very real versions of measurement, indeterminacy and entanglement”.⁸¹ Furthermore, he makes the argument for a new and more ethical kind of economics that will create a “better, fairer and more sustainable economy” (*ibid*). Looking at this statement through the lens of the Starseed worldview, the Starseed would see Orrell’s position as indicators that 5th dimensional understandings are beginning to infiltrate economics. Furthermore, this statement by Orrell comes right out of the Starseed playbook; “Rather than modelling the economy as a kind of efficient machine, it makes more sense to use methods such as complexity theory and network theory that are suited to the study of *living systems*” (*ibid*, my emphasis). The Starseed is consistently quoting responsibility of the self in how they affect their worlds around them, and as emphasised in previous chapters, they believe in an intrinsic connection between us all and thereby find it an imperative to uphold higher standards of behaviour, thought, and action. The Starseed would no doubt agree with Orrell’s statement that “quantum economics (if we can call it that) sees the economy as a living system where ethics plays an important role ... as in quantum physics, the observer is never separate from the system” (*ibid*). To summarise the premise of this article, an economist can no longer claim objective distance from his or her decisions, he or she is involved, immersed, entwined and responsible. (For more interesting discussions and articles about the changing nature of economics see *evonomics.com*.⁸²)

Networks, Cohesion and Processes:

Based on my research with Starseeds, among the new categories that are shaping the postmillennium and anthropological fields for social scientists, I would list digitalia and all that *Being digital* entails, as well as the Anthropocene which is already affecting social perspectives. Undergirding these two strands, and perhaps the most important factor, is the need for a new understanding of the human - both as a temporal Being and in terms of human sociality, beliefs and worldviews - as a (decentred) component within a grid of networks and cohesion that is mutable, adaptable and relational. Anthropologist Richard Wilk for example argues for a ‘social science of connections’ in order to understand this new world, stating that “[t]he problem is finding new ways to understand how units are connected to each other”. Wilk asks that social scientists “take on a more radical reappraisal of how the world is increasingly tied together”⁸³ (see also Capra 2015). Bruno Latour similarly in describing his theory of ‘loops’ writes, “[t]his means that to understand the entanglement of the contradictory and conflicting connections amongst events is not a job that can be done by jumping to

⁸¹ <https://aeon.co/essays/has-the-time-come-for-a-quantum-revolution-in-economics>.

⁸² <http://evonomics.com/>. “The Next Evolution of Economics”.

⁸³ <http://www.anthropology-news.org/index.php/2017/09/19/is-anthropology-ready-for-the-21st-century>.

a higher 'global' level to see them all acting as one single whole; it can only be accomplished by crisscrossing their potential paths with as many instruments as possible to have a chance of detecting in what ways they are connected" (2013:96).

The Sacred in Ecology:

I have described a perspective on networks and cohesion in my discussions of digitalia, and would like to discuss a few points on networks, cohesion and processes in regards to the Anthropocene in this section. In earlier chapters, I have alluded to and made connections between Starseed positions on the environment and their overriding disdain for corporate-driven agendas that are placing the ecological health of our planet into jeopardy. I also stated that Starseeds see everything as interconnected across multiple levels, for example, Narelle Whitedove saw meaning when a sunbird began building its nest on her veranda and wondered what the message was that she should understand. What is interesting is the intersection between ecological understandings of interconnectedness whereby every living component of an ecosystem from large species to tiny bacteria are necessary for the healthy functioning of life, and the repositioning of the human-on-Earth as fully-fledged members of our ecosystems, susceptible and vulnerable to the interplays within a broader environment.

In response to how people felt about ongoing degradation of their surrounding environments Glenn Albrecht, a philosopher and professor of sustainability at Murdoch University, coined the expression 'solastagia' (from the Latin word for comfort, *solacium* and the Greek root for pain, *algia*) to describe "the pain experienced when there is recognition that the place where one resides and that one loves is under immediate assault ... a form of homesickness one gets when one is still at 'home'".⁸⁴ In an article titled "Is There an Ecological Unconscious", Daniel Smith (*ibid*) notes that for Albrecht solastalgia is a "global condition" (*ibid*) and he writes about how the field of psychology is opening up and expanding their field to questions about the human condition with respect to a relationship with the natural environment. According to Smith, a new subfield in psychology called ecopsychology believes that "grief, despair and anxiety are the consequences of dismissing equally deep-rooted ecological instincts", and he quotes Patricia Hasbach, a psychotherapist and prominent ecopsychologist, who says that "[e]copsychology wants to broaden the field again to look at ecological systems. It wants to take the *entire planet* into account" (*ibid*, my emphasis). When speaking with or reading about Starseeds the feeling of solastalgia is usually a prominent one, especially as they see themselves as intrinsically linked right to the cellular level to all life on the planet.

The position that we - in terms of the human mind and sociality - are not separate from nature is not a new one in anthropology, with for example Gregory Bateson's (1972, 2000) work that argued

⁸⁴ <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/31/magazine/31ecopsych-t.html>.

that the way we thought about nature could affect the world and vice versa, and Bateson also employs the term 'loops' to describe the inherent interdependency of the human with nature. As he writes, "[M]an in society took clues from the natural world around him and applied those clues in a sort of metaphoric way to the society in which he lived ... [this] ma[k]es more sense than most of what we do today, because the natural world around us has this general systemic structure and therefore it is an appropriate form of metaphor to enable man to understand himself in his social organization" (1972:492). Reinterpreting and juxtaposing this idea upon an increasingly digitised world linked through speedy communications and rapid dissemination of ideas, Bateson's statement "There is an ecology of bad ideas, just as there is an ecology of weeds" (1972:492) holds an ominous portent of our current anthropogenic climatic situation in the Anthropocene, whilst also describing the spread of ideologies, beliefs, truths and untruths through digitalia. Starseeds agree (as with Ps-Dionysius and Teilhard de Chardin) that we live in an integrated structure of Being linked by Source, and the mind is not separated from the body, nor are our emotions separated from outer events. That Bateson used the word 'metaphor' is significant to me here, for in the Starseed worldview, everything is a metaphor, but by no means less real because of this.

Starseeds often talk about moving beyond duality, and I found it interesting that Latour's Gifford Lecture on the Anthropocene, cited in Chapter Four, highlights that we are at a pivotal point in the social sciences where we need to move beyond the main philosophical position since the Enlightenment of Cartesian dualism which divides or separates 'mind from body or matter' and 'humankind from nature' and instead understand ourselves (and our minds) as being 'one with all' or integrated with rather than independent of or even opposed to matter and nature:

How strange that, after having heard so many clarion calls for embracing materialism, we find ourselves totally unprepared to deal with the material conditions of our atmospheric existence? After so much fun made of those who wish to escape to the 'rear world' of Heaven so as to flee from the harsh conditions of this world of toil and soil down below, here we are, nonetheless, dumbfounded that there might be limits to our prospects, totally unable to state what it is to behave in a worldly, earthly, incarnated fashion. How much we have enjoyed learning about the 'death of God' that was supposed to return us to a human, too human condition, and yet we find ourselves hesitant, fumbling in the dark in the 'valley of tears' wondering what it is like to feel the ground under our feet. The surprise is that we are so surprised at being of here, not exactly humans, but rather Earth bound (2013:108).

The climatic effects of the Anthropocene are demanding this recognition from us and it is an irony that as we are being returned to a relationship to nature that is material and temporal, inclusive and interdependent, the narrative echoes the ecstatic and religious exhortations of the sacred and theosis.

Similarly, with regards to his theory of biocentrism, Robert Lanza, acknowledges that his work will be considered 'New Age' by some, despite the rigorous application of scientific methodology to his analyses. This apparently emerging congruence between some of the 'new age' aspects of Starseeds beliefs and contemporary scientific thinking has led me to my speculation that there is a cross-over or transition occurring between the hard sciences and social understandings. This transition seems to be showing itself in a number of different disciplines, some of which I have pointed out in this chapter, and I believe that the distinction between the (old) dialectic - object and subject - and the line between interiority and exteriority is becoming blurred and indeterminable. Contrarily, it seems that the more embodied awareness we have of our temporal human selves, the wider our scope of understanding is becoming. That practitioners of the growing discipline of embodied cognition such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson state that it is "not just the innocuous and obvious claim that we need a body to reason; rather, it is the striking claim that the very structure of reason itself comes from the details of our embodiment ... to understand reason we must understand the details of our visual system, our motor system, and the general mechanism of neural binding",⁸⁵ further emphasises this point (see also Sam Kriss "You Think With The World, Not Just Your Brain"⁸⁶). And if we take that thought further, and remind ourselves of the observer effect on the material in quantum science then these 'details of our embodiment' are self-oriented and fluctuating, and entirely subjective. (For further reading on recent scientific theorisations of consciousness in relationship to embodiment I recommend *Aeon*⁸⁷ essays "Metaphysics of Metamorphosis" by John Dupré⁸⁸ and "The Real Problem" by Anil Seth.⁸⁹)

Anthropology into the Future:

One of the main themes in new religious studies is questions around whether beliefs in the 'sacred' have been lost to modernism, science and technologies, and I believe this thesis demonstrates that my Starseed research participants have carried into their current-day belief system older religious and traditional beliefs alongside modern cutting-edge scientific concepts. Furthermore, they are a future-looking collective, an amalgamation of science fiction and science fact that is responding to and reflective of current explorations of space - both actual and through the social imaginary.

Listening to a Radio National programme called *Big Ideas*⁹⁰ discussing the NASA Cassini probe that detected salts and complex organic matter in an ocean on the moons of Jupiter with

⁸⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/l/lakoff-philosophy.html>.

⁸⁶ <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/10/extended-embodied-cognition/542808/>.

⁸⁷ Aeon is a digital magazine of ideas, philosophy and culture which 'asks the biggest questions and finds the freshest, most original answers, provided by world-leading authorities on science, philosophy and society.'

⁸⁸ <https://aeon.co/essays/science-and-metaphysics-must-work-together-to-answer-lifes-deepest-questions>.

⁸⁹ <https://aeon.co/essays/the-hard-problem-of-consciousness-is-a-distraction-from-the-real-one>.

⁹⁰ <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/finding-life-in-space/8473868>.

astroscientists who are confident that discovering alien life is an inevitable eventuality rather than a mere possibility, I see evidence that once inconceivable if not outrageous ideas are being added into the social soup. Astrophysicist Alan Duffy and astrogeologist Jon Clarke drop a hypothetical bomb that life on Earth may very well have originated from microbial Martian material, and introduce another little-known fact, that the water on earth did not originate from here, both statements being science fact looking a lot like science fiction. The known world around us is changing and expanding, with recent discussions on mining asteroids and other space entities for minerals and resources and new companies like Planetary Resources conducting the first commercial exploration into space for (initially) water⁹¹ or Dutch organisation Mars One hoping to colonise Mars by 2025.⁹² These incredible events are leading to questions about who owns space with a review of the UN Outer Space Treaty.⁹³

Professor of Philosophy at Auckland University Tim Mulgan asks “Suppose we woke up tomorrow to learn that extraterrestrial life had been discovered. What difference would that make? ... Would they strengthen or weaken our faith in God, or science, or humanity? Would they force us to re-evaluate the importance of our own lives, values and projects?”⁹⁴ I think these are the central themes that underpin my studies with Starseeds. Reading through John Mack’s analysis of his clients’ alien abduction experiences, these questions of self and the process of re-evaluating one’s Being in the world and relationship to other people, society and the natural environment are prevalent. As he writes, the abductees experienced “an expanded personal horizon and a broadening of the sense of self in relation to the larger fabric of universal consciousness” (1994:74), and furthermore, “[t]his is not a purely cognitive process, but one that reaches deeply into the emotional and spiritual lives of the experiencers, profoundly changing their perceptions of themselves, the world, and their place in it” (1994:62).

Another *Big Ideas*⁹⁵ programme blurb titled ‘A New Economics’ asks: “Climate change. Inequality and poverty. Wasteful consumerism. Robots replacing workers. These are a few of the things leading more people to question conventional notions of growth-fuelled, free market, capitalism. So, what would a sustainable, and ‘human-centred’, economy look like?” And again, I am struck by the feeling that our world and many of the norms we hold as ‘normal’ seem to be changing and changing fast. From the outset, in regards to Starseeds, I saw them as a quirky, interesting group of people that despite their way-out ideas had something of value to indicate about our present-day belief systems. At a metaphorical level, I see their views as entirely valid reflections of society, and

⁹¹ <https://www.planetaryresources.com/2017/11/asteroid-mining-is-the-key-to-our-future-expansion-into-space/>.

⁹² <http://www.mars-one.com/mission/roadmap>.

⁹³ <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/spacelaw/treaties/introouterspacetreaty.html>.

⁹⁴ <https://aeon.co/essays/how-the-discovery-of-extraterrestrial-life-would-change-morality>.

⁹⁵ <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/a-new-economics/9123074>.

believe that their worldview also holds indications for the future and how the 'earthbound' human's worldview may develop as digitalia expands into virtual reality, as space becomes more discoverable, and hopefully, as Earth and human beings become embodied and self-aware co-collaborators, fully recognising how integrated and interrelated our (quantum) existence is. As Sagan writes, "If we are to survive, our loyalties must be broadened further, to include the whole human community, the entire planet Earth" (1980:339).

Overview:

When I set out on this thesis, my personal frameworks were a kind of anthropologism, that placed my participants' *humanity* at the centre. This necessitated an exploration of their interiority, using phenomenological theory, in the form of Merleau-Ponty's 'vertical time', as well as his emphasis on the 'primacy of perception', as these theoretical tools seemed the best to describe the ontology of Starseeds' Being in the world. Additional to this, recognising the disembeddedness of our current times, I felt it was important to look at the social influences and social worlds that surrounded them - their exteriority - in which we, non-Starseeds also live. Furthermore, I hoped to conceptualise, using Starseed epistemological frameworks, the real feeling and sense that Starseeds have of living in continuous flux and fluctuation at an energetic level between their inner Being and outer influences, within a postmillennial, digitised and posthuman world.

It was this *time in place* that seemed to me, to exemplify and express some of the key elements of Starseed worldview. The concept of moments in time, vertical time, or being in the present appeared often throughout my studies and this seemed to be heightened by digitalia; by its fast beat, its ever-present newness, and notably many of my referenced articles are current and were popping up for me on digitalia almost on a daily basis. Being placed within this *now* 'time-space', I saw a cohesion and patterning in some Starseed ideas that were not unique to them, but rather shared beliefs within the common discourse. I have written about how I experienced many coincidences since I began researching Starseeds, but after a while, as I developed a theoretical perspective of Starseeds living in a social soup, and being highly responsive to the outer environment, 'coincidences' became the norm. Realising how intertwined Starseed beliefs are with the social imaginary was the basis for my developing digitalia or the social soup as working concepts, but as Wittgenstein might agree, I felt I was only describing what was already there. It seemed that every aspect of Starseed beliefs had a mirror in the 3rd dimension, be it, the principles of biocentrism and Starseed belief that their Being creates reality, or the way that their light-grid of communication resembles digitalia in functionality and non-temporality, or the notion of decentredness and the unravelling of our geocentric point of perspective appearing in discussions on the Anthropocene but also within scientific circles (see for

example a discussion by George Johnson⁹⁶). Living in the somewhat tenuous angst of the Anthropocene, I also felt Starseeds were responding directly to outer factors - globalisation, neoliberalism, 'fake-media', political instability, corporatisation, and the many forms of inequity the world and 'place' over.

An example of how current events and ideas seemed to reflect the Starseed worldview is Starseeds have been claiming that with the Ascension the 'Divine Feminine' is returning, based on their position that we have been suffering (for too long) under an unfair patriarchal system that seeks to dominate and control, and which has relegated to the sidelines the feminine or female archetype to the role of subordinate and sometimes 'evil' in the case of Eve and Mary of Magdalene. Although I did not investigate this more fully, I was astounded to note the development of numerous 'feminist' events in recent times, including discussions on pay parity, protests by women on Trumps' election, and the deluge of sexual allegations against males in power positions and the explosion of the #metoo phenomenon, which is presently reorienting sociocultural understandings of masculine sexual power over women.

While studying Starseeds, I wondered to myself why my research themes were predominantly sociological, and why I wasn't exploring a more personal perspective, revealing for example the human traits of my Starseed friends and research participants who are all engaging, vibrant and lovely people. Hanegraaff wrote about NRMs that sceptics often have "no apparent goal than to ridicule and make fun of the movement" (1998:2), which is the general attitude about my subject's beliefs. Oftentimes, I was met with incredulity, from let's call them, 'normal people', and I found myself sheepishly explaining 'I'm studying with people who think they come from another planet', half-laughing, half apologetic, knowing that the prevailing attitude is one of scepticism. However, over time, with their beliefs in a higher way of being a human here on Earth, their behaviour, manner and actions all led me to gain respect for Starseeds, especially those that I had interactions with. It was the Starseed worldview and conceptualisations of reality-in-flux that propelled the way into social theory and spoke of broader societal themes, especially the effects of living within the rapid, changeable and disembedded reality of digitalia. It was also the Starseed belief that we are all entwined and linked that necessitated an analysis of us, as social humans in relation to one another, and as social beings influencing and being influenced by societal norms and social discourse. In other words, if we are *all* One, what does that 'all' look like? And, it was the Starseed saying 'As above, so below; As within, so without' that inspired my exploration of interiority and subjectivity versus exteriority and objectivity and led me to notice that this theoretical framework was being mirrored and reflected in a number of very interesting ways in the social sphere.

⁹⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/22/science/beyond-energy-matter-time-and-space.html?mcubz=0>.

Starseeds call themselves ‘wayshowers’ and I agree that they are indeed ‘indicators’ of the social soup, and offer a glimpse into the future and how people might reconcile spiritual themes in the context of the digital age, quantum realities and the Anthropocene. Yet what was most compelling about Starseeds was a kind of naivety and belief in the beauty and value of existence. Mack’s recounting of his experiences with abductees had many interesting points that held true for Starseeds as well. He writes “The abduction phenomenon, I have come to realize, forces us, if we permit ourselves to take it seriously, to re-examine our perception of human identity - to look at who we are from a cosmic perspective. This book is not simply about UFOs or even alien abductions. It is about how this phenomenon, both traumatic and transformative, can expand our sense of ourselves and our understanding of reality, and awaken our muted potential as explorers of a universe rich in mystery, meaning and intelligence” (1994:xi). Starseeds value their lives and wellbeing as well as those of every living thing on Earth, and seek to be love embodied, for this is what it means to be ascended. “They experience that they have moved into another reality, but one that is, nevertheless, altogether real. This is a waking reality ... revealing a new reality to the experiencer” (Mack 1994:635).

In conclusion, I wish to thank Starseeds for the wonder of the beyond-belief, and the reminder of what it means to be situated on this pale blue dot as first and foremost a *human* beyond the ties of social and cultural identities which in turn seems to have the effect of grounding, indeed ‘earthing’ one’s Being back into our human bodies to reappraise and realise how fragile and mysterious our existence is. Personally, I hold the view that the 5th dimension is another way of expressing Being in quantum reality, and as we normalise and adapt to the complexity of interrelationships, networks, cohesion and processes that underlies quantum theory, we might gain an appreciation for the Starseed belief that we all interconnected in multiple tangible and intangible ways. I also see the Ascension that Starseeds speak of as a metaphor exemplifying the simple wish for a better, healthier, happier existence and their ardent belief that the best version of humanity will reveal itself in the near future. I hope the 5th dimension arrives soon, don’t you?

Deep in Starseed Space, A Vertical Moment from my Journal:

After talking to Tim Whild, I am perturbed somewhat by my vulnerability. I feel, at this moment, strange and disoriented. This feeling, I think it’s a deep emotional response. I’m inclined to describe it as ‘cellular’ - it feels so not of my body, yet completely my body. I am remembering now waking up in the early morning, suddenly, with light flashes, like looking at a neon sign, white yellow edged against an electric blue background, and words in my ears “these are codes”. I need to look up how universal consciousness works, or perhaps the Durkheimian what was it, divine effervescence? Was it Durkheim? Or perhaps Turner’s *comunitas*. I am really wondering why I am feeling and experiencing all these ‘symptoms’, ‘ascension symptoms’ when I don’t actually think I am a Starseed.

When I set out on this journey, I would have told you that whilst I experience some of the feelings and energetic shifts that Starseeds describe, I do not believe in the validity of being a Star-born soul. I think the Skype chat with Tim has reawakened a feeling of light/love inside of me. It's weird. I feel an unconditional admiration and respect, and it's as if he had a light which has sparked my own light, and it's burning right now, I can feel a *real* sensation in the centre of my chest. After we had finished, I went back to my Skype page to turn it off and the time was 11.22. I first noticed however, that his time was 2.22.

APPENDIX 1: Research Questionnaire

Hello!

My name is Tanya Volentras. Thanks for being a participant in my social anthropology master's research thesis: I really appreciate this! From the outset I want to say - feel free to be as expressive as you like or not. If there are questions that you don't want to answer, that's ok. I want this to be a free-flowing exercise that remains true to how you view the world and I hope you feel my implicit trust in your Truth.

I used to have a 2-hour community radio program called Expressions. I interviewed all sorts of people from different walks of life, usually recording at their home or at a lovely outdoors café. I featured artists and musicians as well, and played music that the interviewee liked but also tried to find other songs that were non-commercial to add to the story. I interviewed a Sudanese man about his childhood (there were many Sudanese refugees in Alice), a shaman, tattooed lesbian Pagans, a Catholic nun who when she turned 56 converted to the Baha'i Faith, a wild and beautiful lady who trekked over 3,000 k/m across the desert pulling three camels who then later went to Kenya to join a camel train library service/Aids clinic, to name but a few.

Every week I was blessed to talk to these interesting and incredible people with rich and diverse lives. The main aim was that they were able to express their worldview; my blurb was 'who you are, why you are, where you are'. I hoped that there could be no possibility of judgement because this was a simple statement of Being, and that my listeners and I could travel along this person's journey, get some insight into how an 'other' views the world.

In this same way, I hope that you can just Be and know that I respect where you are at, wherever that may be. 😊

Ideally, I would love you to write a lot, so I can be sure to get a strong sense of what you mean. However, please just write what you feel happy about, ignore questions that don't apply, and add anything you think I might have missed out. If you would prefer a *Skype* session, can you please write to me and we'll make arrangements for the best meeting time.

I am hoping to understand more about 'Cosmics and Starseeds' 😊. What is the Ascension? How do we know about the Ascension? Why do you believe in the Ascension paradigm – what are the influencing factors motivating belief in the Ascension? These are some of the questions I am trying to answer.

I want to understand the *why* of the Ascension, the *how* of the Ascension and the *where to?* I feel this belief system is growing, largely due to the internet, and I would like to examine how and if the net is helping the process along.

For myself, I think I am part cosmic, mostly green, part hippy, part suburban too (at the moment) it must be admitted, very much a Samoan and all that entails, in Love with Nature in every form –

including people, but especially trees and the Ocean. I do not fully understand the Ascension, but can see showings of ascension-like happenings in many different layers of expression and understanding. If I do refer to your answers in the thesis, I will give you pseudonyms and thought lovely cosmic names would work well ☺ - most of you already have these, but I'll still change your names to protect your identity. If you like, you can choose your own name. I will treat your answers with the utmost confidentiality.

Also, anyone who wants to read the final thesis, or the sections that apply to the questionnaire, I am happy and willing of course to share - in fact, ethically and following anthropological protocols I am also obligated to ☺.

If you're interested, you can look up the NZ Anthropology code of ethics here- <http://asaanz.science.org.nz/codeofethics.html>.

If anyone has questions, please write to me via email: tvolentrasresearch@yahoo.com.au

Or we can *Skype* if you like – I am under 'Tanya Research' on *Skype*.

Can you please indicate in the questionnaire if you consent to me contacting you?

Some of your answers will no doubt open up new thoughts and impressions and I might like to explore your answers more deeply with you?

Thanks once again.

I am glad to be connecting with you and extremely appreciative of your contribution.

Official Massey University Guideline

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Name: *Please choose your name for this research thesis – otherwise you can leave it to me.*

Gender: I am interested to see what differences and similarities (if any) there are between the answers from female and male respondents.

Age in earth years:

Region(s) of residence: I only would like to know the region or if you prefer, country where you are living, not specific addresses.

Can I contact you? If so, please provide contact details:

A supreme Being in terms of God or Source: Can you please explain who this is or what this means for you?

- a) Do you feel 'in touch' with this Being?
- b) How has/does this Being revealed/reveal itself to you?
- c) Does this Being have influence in your life? In what way? Please explain.

Can you remember when you first knew about this Being, and in what circumstances was this?

- a) Childhood experiences
- b) Adult experiences
- c) Current experiences

Do you share these views with others, or is your view a personal one?

If others share your view, how do you know this?

- a) Communication through discussions?
- b) Online communications and groups?
- c) Own research into your beliefs?

Do you feel your views are mainstream, as in, broadly accepted by a greater proportion of society?

If they're not mainstream, how do you think the mainstream views your worldview? Does it matter (what the mainstream thinks)?

Can I ask if there is any particular group name? For the moment I am saying Cosmics and Starseeds.

Is there a notion or concept of evil in your worldview? Who or what is this and how does it manifest itself?

What are your greatest concerns? Please write something about the items in this list that you are engaged with in any way such as practically or emotionally?

- e) Environment?
- f) Political landscape?
- g) Media?
- h) Corruption?
- i) Humanity?
- j) The future?
- k) Activism and social change?
- l) Health?
- m) Education?
- n) Children/family and their wellbeing?

Please explain what you feel and know about the Ascension? What is it? Why is it?

How did you come to believe this is happening and how strongly do you feel this to be true?

Can you please tell me if you come from somewhere else apart from Mother Earth?

How do you know this? Have you had any tangible experiences that have shown you this on a deep level?

Please explain your understanding of 'Energy' to me?

Are you able to pinpoint where or how you have come by this definition?

Please explain your knowledge or understanding of the 5th dimension. Other dimensions?

Do you channel or are interested in reading channelled messages on various sites?

Has the internet helped you broaden your perspectives and understanding of your beliefs? And if so, in what way? Please explain.

Do you feel a sense of community with any or some internet groups with shared interests and beliefs? Or perhaps have made some good friendships through these groups?

Has internet communication strengthened your sense of Being, in terms of, validation of your ideas, community and friendships, new ideas and concepts?

Can I ask what you think about these? Please try to explain in as much detail as you can. Do you agree with these/not agree - please outline your reasons.

Vaccination?

Fluoridation

Homeopathy/Acupuncture/other natural therapies?

Reptilian control?

Flat earth theory?

HAARP and chemtrails

Gaia and/or any other names you might have for Earth.

Christianity: If you like, you can answer in terms of the religion, but also, please consider what you might think of Christ Consciousness. Is there morality and a code of ethics in Christian theology?

Buddhism

Islam

Judaism

Wicca

Paganism

Shamanism

Angels/guardian angels

Spirit guides

Past Lives

Psychic abilities/telekinesis/teleporting

'Travelling' in dreams or visions

Media: movies, television, newspapers, internet sites.

Politics: Are you politically engaged, and if so, are you aligned philosophically with any of the parties? This party does not need to be in your country, but can include any political ideology that you like and find compatibility with. If not, why not?

Corporations**Banks****Money****The NASA Space program**

Environment: How do you feel about the environment? What I am unsure about, is how important Earth is to 'cosmics'; if they are to ascend, do they really need to worry about this?

What is/what are the most important factor(s) related to the Ascension that brings you happiness?

Please write about anything more that you feel I ought to know but have not thought to ask about here.

Best regards,

Tanya

APPENDIX II: What is the Fifth Dimension?

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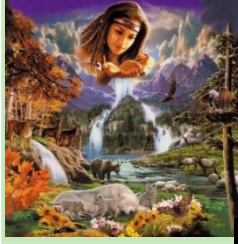
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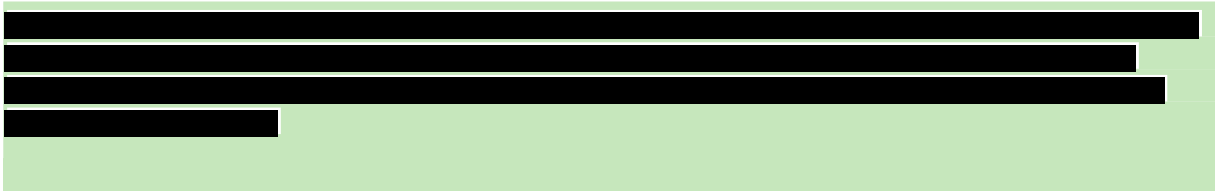
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