

The Otherworldly Life of Rocket Scientist John Whiteside Parsons: A Journey into Occultism, Magick, and the Dawn of the Space Age



In the annals of science and the occult, the life of John Whiteside Parsons stands as an enigmatic and captivating tale. A brilliant rocket scientist who played a pivotal role in the early space program, Parsons was also a devoted occultist and practitioner of Thelema, the religion founded by Aleister Crowley. His life was a remarkable fusion of scientific inquiry and spiritual exploration, leading him on a path that intertwined with mystics, magicians, and agents of the United States government.



Strange Angel: The Otherworldly Life of Rocket

Scientist John Whiteside Parsons by George Pendle

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Early Life and Scientific Career

John Whiteside Parsons was born in Los Angeles, California, on October 2, 1914. From a young age, he displayed an extraordinary aptitude for mathematics and science. At the age of 17, he enrolled at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), where he excelled in his studies and became particularly interested in rocketry.

In 1936, Parsons joined the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) at Caltech, where he made significant contributions to the development of liquid-fueled rockets. He played a crucial role in designing and testing the first rocket engine to burn liquid oxygen and alcohol, a breakthrough that paved the way for future space missions. Parsons' scientific prowess earned him the admiration of his colleagues and the attention of the United States Army, which sought his expertise in its wartime rocketry programs.

Exploration of the Occult

Parallel to his scientific pursuits, Parsons embarked on a journey into the realm of the occult. In the early 1940s, he encountered the writings of Aleister Crowley, the infamous occultist known as "The Beast 666." Drawn to Crowley's philosophy of Thelema, which emphasized individual freedom and the pursuit of one's true will, Parsons became an ardent disciple and a member of Crowley's magical order, the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO).

Under Crowley's guidance, Parsons delved into a wide range of occult practices, including astrology, alchemy, and ritual magick. He formed a magical group known as the "Babalon Working" with his close friend, the artist Marjorie Cameron, and other members of the OTO. Together, they performed complex rituals aimed at summoning spiritual entities and transforming consciousness.

Collaboration with L. Ron Hubbard

In 1945, Parsons' life took a bizarre turn when he became involved with L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology. Hubbard had joined the OTO in the early 1940s and became a close associate of Parsons. Together, they developed a plan to use magick to influence the outcome of the war and establish a new world order.

However, their collaboration proved to be short-lived. Hubbard, motivated by personal ambition, soon parted ways with Parsons and took advantage of their magical workings for his own financial gain. Parsons felt betrayed and disillusioned, leading to a bitter rift between the two men.

Legal Troubles and Mysterious Death

In the aftermath of the war, Parsons faced legal troubles related to his involvement with explosives and unauthorized use of government property.

In 1952, he was convicted of illegally storing gunpowder and sentenced to a short prison term.

Upon his release, Parsons struggled to rebuild his life. He continued to practice magick but became increasingly isolated and embittered. On June 17, 1952, Parsons was killed in a mysterious explosion at his home in Pasadena, California. The cause of the explosion remains unknown, with theories ranging from accidental detonation to government assassination.

Legacy and Impact

John Whiteside Parsons' life remains a subject of fascination and speculation. His contributions to rocket science helped pave the way for the exploration of space, while his occult pursuits have made him a legendary figure in the world of magick. Some believe that Parsons possessed genuine spiritual powers, while others see him as a troubled individual who lost his way in the labyrinth of the occult.

Regardless of one's interpretation, Parsons' story is a testament to the human capacity for both scientific innovation and spiritual exploration. His life stands as a reminder that the boundaries between science and the occult can be fluid and that the pursuit of knowledge can take us to unexpected and extraordinary places.

Long Descriptive Keywords for Alt Attribute

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