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UFO PHENOMENON AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY: A CASE STUDY [PA]

Jean-Michel Abrassart

The Psychosocial Model explains UFO phenomenon with the following mechanisms: simple mistakes, elaborate mistakes, hallucinations, false memories and hoaxes. This article will specifically focus on the topic of hallucinations in relation to UFO sightings. If illusions are perceptive distortions of an objective stimulus, hallucinations are by definition perceptions without any stimulus. Those cases are probably rare, but they do exist. Research in psychology has shown that the prevalence of psychopathologies is not bigger amongst UFO witnesses than the general population. Nevertheless, we also know today that people can have hallucinations, including visual hallucinations, without suffering from a psychopathology. We'll present a case study after a brief review of the literature.

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FROM JOTT TO A BASIC LAW NORMALISING THE PARANORMAL [SPR]

Mary Rose Barrington

All psychical phenomena are a challenge to realism, and jott, implicating the de-materialisation and restoration of existing articles, goes further than the materialising of a substance (or something) that returns to its source. Such phenomena demand a model tending to idealism, while not necessarily excluding the actuality of a material world.

In the model proposed here the subconscious minds of all creatures are in an oceanic network, a concept familiar to psychical researchers. The dedicated purpose of our “telepathic circuits” is to receive a constant stream of quasi-hypnotic instructions emanating from a cosmic control mechanism telling us how to promote and maintain a materialised environment, i.e., how to constitute matter in its particle state so far as it is necessary for our common purposes.

The cosmic control is an autonomic function of the oceanic mind, and its principal directive to us is to ensure the observance of strict mechanistic causality and thus safeguard moment to moment sequential consistency. This causal stability is the default mode. It can however fail, or be modified or overridden by unconscious human intention, which may or may not reflect conscious volition. The most obvious causal breakdowns occur when there is willful defaulting on environmental maintenance duties. Willful default

may entail sending and receiving private telepathic messages or, more dramatically, when we try to disrupt stability by encouraging the phenomena of physical mediumship.

We may have no desire or intention to disrupt causality and may fail in our maintenance duties because of simple fatigue or inattention; if we then happen to want something that has lapsed into potential vibrational form we shall experience jolt, i.e., find that the neglected item is not there, where it was. We may also be motivated unconsciously to “lose” an article for our own good (though it may not feel like that). When things joltle we receive urgent hypnotic commands to restore the joltled item, and if we are skillful we get a comeback, less skillful, we get a walkabout, and if quite ineffective, a flyaway.

As between normal (causal) events and extra-causal (paranormal) events, are we dealing with a difference in kind or degree? It is contended that causal and extra-causal are in fact different ends of a continuous spectrum, causal events lying under or near the apex of a probability curve while the extracausal variants are at the extremity. Lying between the two are incidents of varying probability where human volition bends the course of events mostly within the constraints of default causality.

While default causality is the mode enjoined by the cosmic control, it is a directive rather than a law. There is just one basic and unbreakable law of nature, that of probability, the most probable event always complying with default causality and therefore appearing to be invariable and inevitable; but it is neither, and paranormal events at the most improbable end of the spectrum also lie within the boundaries of probability. One effect of this law is that a period when very many incidents of extreme improbability occur, whether spontaneous, explorative, or experimental, it will be balanced out by a period of relentless default causality.

Though this model amounts to a normalisation of the paranormal, it assumes a cosmos in which the processes of mind—thought, observation, desire, volition, intention, command—control the course of material events.

The concept of mind over matter raises the usual problems of how the forces of supposedly immaterial mind impinge on the material forces that supposedly have no mind. In the proposed model the cosmos is composed of and inhabited by mindstuff, which may exist in a mind state or a matter state, like water and ice, the same substance in interchangeable states. The water, one continuous body, flows freely, while the ice, in effect, does as it is told.

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CAN RESULTS IN “EXPERIMENTAL PARAPSYCHOLOGY” BE ACCOUNTED FOR BY “QUESTIONABLE RESEARCH PRACTICES”? [PA]

Dick J. Bierman¹, James P. Spottiswoode², & Aron Bijl¹

Meta-analytic results are often cited as strong evidence of a paranormal anomaly with p -values in the range between 10^{-6} and 10^{-16} . We ran computer simulations to see if these experimental results could be explained by six applicable Questionable Research Practices (QRPs). Simulations ran in sets of the number of studies in the experimental meta-analytic database, with the sample sizes of actual experiments. Experimental results of the meta-analytic database are represented by four metrics. Two describe the dependent variable trial and mean experiment hit rates of around 31%, where 25% is expected by chance, one describes the correlation between sample size and hit rate and one describing the p -value distribution of the database. Employing a genetic algorithm (GA) to optimize the parameters describing the QRPs, the best fit was determined using a fitness function F , defined as sum of z^2 -scores for the four metrics. A good fit with the empirical database values was found using “QRP’s only.” However the simulations for that “best case” indicate an unreasonably high number of over one studies going into the file drawer for each published study and 1.47 subjects being removed in a biased way in *each* study. Also for each published study in this “best” simulation, slightly less than one study was broken off prematurely, and disappeared because the results were below chance.

We therefore restricted the parameter space to more reasonable intervals based on values QRP parameters measured in QRP studies. Using these “reasonable” regions in the QRP parameter space, an unsatisfactory best fit ($F = 10.2$, $p < .05$) was obtained where about 55% of the anomalous extra chance scoring reported in the meta-analysis could be “explained” away by the use of QRPs. Because the simulated data did still *significantly* differ from the empirical data we allowed for a “true telepathic effect” free parameter in the interval from 25% to 31%. With a true psi hit rate of 27% the fitness became $F = 1.8$ ($p = .47$), where $F = 0$ is a perfect fit and simulation and experimental data were in very good agreement.

It is concluded that meta-analytic databases may be strongly polluted by the effects of QRPs and that simulations of these QRPs in sets of experiments corresponding to the meta-analysis and having the outcomes fit to the empirical results by use of GAs may give a handle to quantitatively correct for the biases introduced by QRPs. This methodology of simulating the influence of QRPs on meta-analytic results has wide applicability outside the domain of experimental parapsychology.

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AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTEDNESS AMONG TWINS IN RELATION TO ATTACHMENT [PA]

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Parapsychological research into distant interactions between individuals seems to indicate that the bond between sender and receiver is important. The present study was designed to investigate the ostensible relationship between telepathy and attachment between twins. By applying the concept of attachment from developmental psychology, this becomes the first study in parapsychology to explore the degree of attachment between twins as a potential dependent variable relating to their apparent telepathic connection. At the current stage of evaluating a new methodology, we report the design and findings of the pilot study. From an initial pool of thirty pairs of twins, four pairs of identical twins were selected on the basis of their responses to the Exceptional Experiences Questionnaire and on the basis of the availability of both twins to take part in the study. The test procedure required each of them to alternate in the role of sender in which they were exposed to a shock or surprise stimuli and in the role of receiver in which they were physiologically monitored for their electrodermal responses (EDR). Senders were presented with altogether five stimuli, one stimulus during each of the five trials per twin session. For each trial, the stimulus was presented during a 30-second period randomly chosen from eight possible such epochs composing in total four minutes. With a further 30 seconds added to establish baselines before and after each session, this meant each session would last 5 minutes. Graphs from 19 of the useable sessions belonging to three pairs of twins were analyzed by the lead researcher (GB), who was blind to the time epochs in which the stimuli had been presented by the researcher working with the senders (AP). An independent evaluation of the EDRs from the EDR, in this study used for the receiver was carried out by the designer of the equipment. The task here was to identify a peak of the graph in the receiver’s reaction which might approximately correspond to the midpoint in the period the stimulus had been presented to the sender. In four sessions out of the 19, these identifications corresponded to the actual exposure period for the shock or surprise stimulus constituting so-called “hits,” compared to the MCE = 2.375. Although this fails to reach significance, three out of these four correct placements were contributed by just one of the twins. The attachment data that twins contributed via the EEQ questionnaire indicated that all the twins in the current study seemed to experience similar high levels of attachment. This consistency in strong and close relationships meant of course there was a lack of variance as concerns the hypothesis that attachment would predict the scores. The results of the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR) indicated that all the twins had very low scores on attachment-related anxiety and avoidance in their relationships. The profiles of twins having many hits in the telepathy exper-

iment as regards any aspects of dysfunctional attachment (anxiety and avoidance) were not significantly different from those of the others. The data provide justification for a major study using this methodology with selected pairs of twins. Some major improvements in the design were suggested. One of these involves the synchronous monitoring of the electrodermal activity for the sender as well as the receiver in order to give a precise record of the timing and the effect of the shock stimuli.

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ERNESTO DE MARTINO'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

Giulio Caratelli & Maria Luisa Felici

Ernesto de Martino (Napoli, 1908–Roma, 1965) was a great ethnologist, Italian historian of religions and folklorist, without any doubt a very extraordinary personality in the Italian culture life and the social sciences of the past 20th century, and a scholar marked by a wide range of cognitive interests, in particular also for the field of parapsychology, of which he had a wide knowledge.

His starting privileged source of information in this field, anyway, was the figure of the Italian scholar Ernesto Bozzano, with which furthermore de Martino had entertained at the beginning of the 1940s a short and very interesting correspondence.

In this research, therefore, it is presented shortly the parapsychological interests, rather constant, in de Martino's life, which, among other things, pointed out the great spreading of reliable paranormal phenomena, both "psychic" and physical, among the peoples of ethno-anthropological interest, with much emphasis on the perspective to study exactly in those human frames not only beliefs and mythical and rituals systems but also the possible objectivity of certain extraordinary manifestations studied scientifically by parapsychology.

In such perspective, de Martino disapproved of those aspects dominated by the ethnology which appeared to him still with a clear and old "Tylor orientation," that is belonging to a discipline privileging only the legitimate ideological aspects and tendentially denying the reality of the paranormal, without considering the importance to verify objectively, systematically and rigorously the phenomena—presumably extraordinary—that may present to its observation.

Interesting in such cognitive perspective and research are his proposal and contributions to the specific discipline he called "ethnometapsychics," considered as a science of observation and experimentation able to open new and interesting perspectives with the investigation of parapsychological phenomenology among the so called "primitive peoples."

Certainly very remarkable is his precise and personal ethno-anthropological "field research" in Southern Italy in 1957, promoted by the Parapsychology Foundation with a special and qualified interdisciplinary research group and based fundamentally on some numerous particular practices of healing and on the system of the traditional beliefs that are in connection with them, an investigation which, among others, has favourably allowed us to observe and record in detail also some clear uncommon physical effects placed in the phenomenological complex of the *poltergeist*, and more, prophetic and telepathic dreams, episodes of clairvoyance, and so on.

In this paper six sectors of de Martino's parapsychological interests are pointed out: (a) "the magic world," (b) "early interests," (c) "Ernesto de Martino and Ernesto Bozzano," (d) "further contributions," (e) the "field study," (f) "the dispute with Mircea Eliade."

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PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH, TRAUMA, DISSOCIATION, ABSORPTION,
AND FANTASY PRONENESS AMONG DANISH SPIRITUAL PRACTITIONERS [PA]

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Groups of spiritual practitioners (P) ($n = 38$), long-term residents in a center offering spiritual courses (R) ($n = 8$), and matched control groups from a general, population sample for P (CP) ($n = 45$) and for R (CR) ($n = 14$) were compared. P had high levels of education and tended to be in a committed relationship and belong to the Danish National Church, whereas R had a lower level of education and were unlikely to be in a committed relationship or belong to the Church, suggesting social marginality. All groups completed the Brief Symptom Inventory-53 (BSI-53), a measure of psychological distress. P did not differ from the control groups on the Global Severity scale (GSI) or the other subscales of the BSI-53 except for scoring lower on the phobic anxiety subscale. In contrast, R scored higher on the GSI and most BSI-53 subscales than P and the control groups, and published norms for Danish and US populations. P and R did not differ on the subscales of somatization or interpersonal sensitivity. These two groups also filled out measures of dissociation, general and severe trauma, absorption, and fantasy proneness. R scored higher than P on dissociation, severe trauma, and absorption. The GSI correlated with dissociation, a history of serious trauma and (weakly) with absorption, but not with general trauma or fantasy-proneness. Overall, the results do not support the view that most spiritual practitioners have higher psychological distress or are socially marginal, although there is a subset of more troubled individuals.

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COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PHENOMENOLOGICAL ASPECTS IN RECURRENT AND SHARED
APPARITIONAL EXPERIENCES [PA]

Marcelo Eremián

Experiences of encounters with ghosts and other apparitions have sparked interest in almost every culture since ancient times, persisting to this day along with related beliefs, myths, and diverse theories. These experiences have created or extended both cognitive and emotional questions in the percipients, as well as eliciting many different reactions in their social environments. Since the late 19th century, the scientific study of anomalous experiences has been based solely on the investigation of spontaneous cases. In contrast, the particular emphasis of this paper is on the analysis of several cases of “collective and recurrent” apparitional experiences in a public context. This is completely different from the most frequently reported studies, and it is based on the model and approach proposed by Irwin (1994), who explored the phenomenology of apparitional experiences in terms of form, frequency, duration, the qualities of the apparitional figures, the circumstances of occurrence, and emotional reactions to the apparitions. The first two cases discussed here developed at a Health Centre located in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where medical staff and residents pointed out diverse experiences of an anomalous nature. Two other reports came from the Buenos Aires National Library, where librarians and employees claimed to have witnessed apparitions and other unusual events. In all four cases, we find well-educated individuals who, according to their own statements, were involuntary witnesses of shared apparitional experiences.

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A MIXED METHODS EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ALLEGED TELEPATHIC INTERSPECIES COMMUNICATION WITH DOMESTIC DOGS (*CANIS LUPUS FAMILIARIS*) [SPR]

Deborah L. Erickson

This research explored the proposition that alleged telepathic interspecies communication, or human telepathic connection to animals, may be possible by learning simple contemplative/meditative techniques to quiet the mind and shift consciousness. Telepathy is a controversial topic not accepted by mainstream science, despite multiple research efforts over many years that have shown positive effects. This research is based on the hypothesis that the process to shift cognition into a pattern similar to daydreaming, or to the hypnagogic and hypnopompic states on the edge of sleep, may allow for a consciousness alteration that may enable telepathy.

The research used a mixed-methods approach and measured, via a quantitative rating scale and qualitative comments, the accuracy of the information received during the telepathic animal communication session as judged by the guardian. The research explored the following questions: When a telepathic animal communication session was conducted with a domestic dog (*Canis lupis familiaris*), was accurate information received by the researcher for quantitative questions as judged by the human guardian on Likert Scale of 1 (entirely inaccurate) to 6 (entirely accurate). What qualitative comments did the human guardian have for other information received by the researcher related to the questions posed by the guardian? What was the overall accuracy rating as judged by the human guardians? And finally, what common issues were raised by the guardians' questions and comments?

The research completed 50 alleged telepathic animal communication sessions conducted by the researcher over the telephone with a human guardian and a domestic canine. All guardians and their canines were physically located in another city or state from the researcher. Five standard questions were asked of the animal, three of which were quantitative and rated by the guardian; the remainder of the session was devoted to the guardian's questions for their animal. The five standard questions were: (a) How many humans do you live with? (b) Have you lived with your current guardian since you were young? (c) What is your favorite food or treat(s) you get now? (d) What do you like most about your life? and (e) What would you like to change about your life?

Participants were recruited via email from the networks of the researcher. Recipients of the recruiting email were encouraged to forward to other canine guardians whom they thought might have an interest. This forwarding resulted in an overwhelming response to the researcher; the research was originally planned for 20 sessions but expanded to 50 sessions when more than 130 responses were received to the recruitment email, which indicated an extremely high level of interest in this type of research.

Human guardians were required to be of legal age, to speak and read English, have an email account/access to the Internet, and be able to send an electronic photo via email. Each animal participant was a domestic canine at least one year old that had lived with the guardian for at least one year. They were an almost even gender split with 26 male and 24 female canines. The canine ages ranged from 1.5 to 14 years old, with an average age of 7.6 years old. The average number of years with the guardian was 6.1 years. There were 27 pure breed canines and 23 were mixes of one or more breeds. (For purposes of this research, a pure breed is defined as identified by the guardian with only one breed description, rather than multiple breeds or "mix" in the description.) There were a total of 35 breeds or mixed breeds represented in the canine participant pool.

Fifty sessions were conducted between May 3, 2013, and June 22, 2013. Of the 50 sessions, 49 were conducted with female guardians and only one male guardian. The researcher was located in Kalama, WA, USA—all guardians were in a different city/state from the researcher and represented 36 different cities. The total time for all sessions was 26.5 hours as recorded by the conference call service. This did not include researcher's preparation time of a minimum of 15 minutes before each session, which represents another 12.5 hours, resulting in 39 total hours for the research. The shortest session was 16 minutes, and the longest was 60 minutes, with an overall average of 32 minutes for all sessions.

All sessions were recorded via a conference call service and the recording was available to the guardian after the session. The researcher transferred all questions asked and responses allegedly received telepathically from the animal during the session to an online survey form. The guardian judged the accuracy of the information received by the researcher on the survey form after the communication session was completed, independent of further contact with the researcher. The average overall accuracy rating for all 50 sessions was 5.12, indicating a possibility that accurate information was received by a human from a canine via a telepathic human-canine connection. In a summary breakdown of ratings, 48 sessions (96%) were rated by the guardian as a 4 (moderately accurate) to 6 (entirely accurate) and more than a third of the sessions (41, or 82%) received a rating of 5 or 6. An analysis of the qualitative data indicated several common canine issues, such as:

- canines reactive to other dogs in public
- canines reactive to strangers entering their home
- conflicts between canines in a multi-dog household
- affection between canines in a multi-dog household
- physical health issues, and
- emotional/spiritual support issues.

The results of this study contribute to the body of research into animal cognition and consciousness. The findings further contribute to inter-animal empathy studies as well as the wealth of literature that supports the human-animal bond. Further research is needed to explore additional nuances of this category of parapsychology research.

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THE PARADIGMATIC BREAKDOWN: A MODEL TO DEFINE THE DYNAMICS OF EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES [PA]

Renaud Evrard

This article is another attempt to define exceptional experiences (ExE) and the epistemological frameworks in which to categorize them. The model proposed here is not really original: it is rather at a crossroad of ideas discussed independently by many authors. Its aim is to define ExE without any reference to a “paranormal reality”—but without ruling it out—while improving the understanding of their dynamics.

A first important distinction required for this model is the one between “reality” and the “real.” Reality is *always* a model of the real. Psychiatrist John Mack spoke of “ontological shock/clash” as well as “ontological resistance” to describe common responses to ExEs. Mack referred to a constructivist approach of knowledge, derived from Kuhn’s notion of “paradigm,” for which individuals order their knowledge through “organizing psychological systems” usually called “worldviews.” The pattern identified by Mack in his study of abduction experiences can be extended to all ExEs. This is what provides the *Model of the paradigmatic breakdown* by describing what happens when an experience (*local variable*) is not or hardly inscribed in a personal worldview (*global variable*).

The concept of dissonance is also very useful to describe the dynamics of ExEs, contrary of the notion of “paranormal” which is full of implicit interpretations. As we can’t say if all ExEs overlap with what parasciences call “spontaneous cases,” they must be treated by focusing on their singularity and subjective appraisal. Rather than prematurely applying anomalistic categories, it is necessary to remember that the paranormal is not the same for everyone. In addition to various forms of intrapersonal dissonance, we have to consider that the paranormal attribution is also rarely immediately, and even more rarely permanently, applied on the experience.

The logic at work in the ExE is not the one of the *deviation from a norm*, but of the *exception to a rule*, because a norm refers to an *objective law* while a rule refers to a *subjective law*. ExE dynamics may only be felt from a certain degree of dissonance, when the deviation becomes breakage. Talking about “paradigmatic breakdown” supports the idea that what happens with ExE is a cognitive process similar to what happens in the formation of the scientific mind, proceeding by deconstruction and reconstruction thanks to a dialogue between assumptions and empirical observations.

Several convergent models have been developed independently to account for the psychological responses to a confrontation with the “paranormal.” We will briefly present three of them: first, the initial model of Rhea White, then the “hermit crab syndrome” described by the Belgian psychologist François Mathijsen, and finally the model of the French sociologist Jean-Bruno Renard.

In all cases, the ExE places the individual in a state of cognitive and emotional dissonance in which the experience shifts his/her worldview. But not all ExEs are transformative because they only have the *potential* to alter or subvert the life of an individual. White qualified ExEs as “pre-paradigmatic” as they are only transformative if the individual decides to invest meaning into it. For brevity, the multiple clinical and epistemological implications of such a model will only be sketched.

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SIX FUNCTIONS OF HETERODOXY: EXAMPLES FROM THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGY AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

Renaud Evrard

The intersection between psychology and psychical research attracts the interest of many historians. Most of them have observed that this fertile intersection was gradually replaced by a *demarcation* between an *official orthodox scientific psychology* and a *marginal heterodox pseudoscientific parapsychology*. Unfortunately, many historians described this demarcation as an irreversible fact, a sign of scientific progress. I analyze this demarcation through a symmetrical approach of the history of parapsychology and I suggest a tentative model of six functions of heterodoxy. Three of them are said “negative” and the three other “positive,” and they all are more or less “progressive” or “regressive.” They are applied on three aspects of science: *knowledge*, *practices*, and *domains*.

These six functions are: (a) *Scarecrow*: Several historians already suggest that creating such a heterodoxy was a great help in enhancing the recognition and professionalization of modern psychology. Methodological pitfalls of parapsychology served as an inverted model for psychology. (b) *Control group*: For some counteradvocates, the results of parapsychologists can't be positive, therefore all the successes indicate the existence of gaps to fill. Methodological and analytical requirements always increased and allowed parapsychological controversies to advance science as a whole. (c) *Sweep vehicle*: Following examples like lucid dreams or other anomalous experiences, it seems that parapsychology retrieves the “objects” that psychology doesn't want or can't handle, until it is able to do so. Heterodoxy seems to be the marginal laboratory installed in the border areas, where it intermingles rejected and premature knowledge. (d) *Subversion*: Among its positive functions, the heterodoxy would be there to challenge individuals, to test the supposed acquired knowledge, and to destabilize the dogmas in order to encourage scientific progress. Many parapsychological issues are now hot topics in psychology and science as a whole, like decline or experimenter's effects. (e) *Touchstone*: Research in heterodox areas is relevant to test the strengths and shortcomings of available scientific methods from other orthodox fields. At a personal level too, to be confronted with heterodoxy would be an “excellent training,” a touchstone, for the formation of scientific thought. (f) *Pathfinder*: The most progressive function of heterodoxy would not situate parapsychology as a field of knowledge as such, but as the front line of the orthodox domain, as the scientific study of all anomalies.

Few of these functions were already addressed by historians, so we also have to illustrate them by contemporary examples from the current interactions of psychology and parapsychology. These contemporary illustrations suggest that these processes of “boundary-work” are still at work, implying a contradiction with the idea of an indisputable and permanent epistemological separation between these two disciplines.

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YOGA: SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION AND EXTRAORDINARY POWERS [PA]

Maria Luisa Felici & Giulio Caratelli

With the Sanskrit word “yoga,” in the first Indian religions, it was indicated the ascetic and meditative practice. The word “yoga” means union. This term appears for the first time in the Katha Upanishad which goes back to about the 5th century before Christ. Through the constant practice of yoga it is possible to obtain the domain on all spiritual forces, for the achievement of several aims like interior peace, supreme knowledge, the liberation from the chains of the world and of the matter and the union to the Supreme Being.

The yoga doctrine represents one of the six systems of the Hindu religious philosophy and each one is the result of the elaboration of a wide philosophical literature. One of these inspires to the classic yoga system presented by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras.

The yoga defined by Patanjali is also called the yoga of the eight steps, necessary to achieve realization and truth, and a yogi or yogin is the disciple following such discipline. The yoga philosophy puts as background above all the knowledge of the nadis and chakras. The former are very subtle channels present in the whole human body. Inside the nadis an energy, the prana, flows, but generally it is not consciously perceived. The point in which two or more nadis join generates a centre of cosmic energy called a chakra.

In the human body there are 7 main chakras, 21 middle chakras and 117 minor chakras. The seven main chakras are aligned along an axis, from the coccyx to the head and are situated in correspondence of important organs or plexus. The main chakras are, from bottom to the top: muladhara, swadhistana, manipura, anahata, vishudda, ajna or trikuti, sahasrara. The middle and minor chakras are situated in correspondence of points of the human body of minor importance as articulations, glands, and so on.

The purification from feelings of rage, and hate, related to the material world promotes the opening of the chakras and favors the development of such positive characteristics, as humility, sincerity, empathy, and others, and in some cases, of the siddhis. So the yogi may achieve one or more siddhis, as, among others: a very light or very heavy body; a little or great body; control of the passions and the emotions; clairvoyance; control of the mind; uplift in the air (levitation); absence of hunger or thirst.

It must be remarked, anyway, that the gurus, yogis and yoga disciples do not assign any particular material and spiritual value to the siddhis, which, on the contrary, are considered the greatest obstacles towards the realization and quest for God. Besides, the siddhis have never to be used for egoistic aims and to damage other human beings.

Since the 1960s, parapsychological research has taken into consideration the possibility to study the effect of the meditation practice, which seems to be the way leading to siddhis, to do a comparison with some paranormal phenomena.

The researchers who have carried out investigations in such directions basically took the task to verify if those claims about psychic awareness could be verified in controlled laboratory conditions, examining with proper experimental designs the possible increase of psi performance correlated to increased levels of meditation practice.

What we have acquired so far on the whole in parapsychological research justifies, without a doubt, the great relevance of the topic of meditation and justifies the need for more in depth research and studies in such a promising field.

The obtained results indicate that age and years of practice of meditation correlate significantly with the psi scores (ESP and PK), giving therefore a reliable support to the Yogic and also Buddhist teachings that state that such abilities may arise as a result of meditation practice.

As far as Italy is concerned, true experimental research in this field has not been carried out; however, some reflections about yoga have put its great relevance constantly in evidence, in particular that its supernormal “powers” are means for better exploration and comprehension of the human personality and therefore that the cultural heritage represented by yoga may bring new knowledge both for psychology and parapsychology.

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INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PSYCHOSOCIAL AND NEUROLOGICAL PREDICTORS OF SURVEILLANCE DETECTION VIA EXTRASENSORY MEANS [PA]

Ross Friday & David Luke

Many people have turned to see someone behind them due to a “sense” they were being watched. Others have “inexplicably” become aware of a conversation involving them, despite it being inaudible. There are many theoretical explanations for these events, one of which is that extrasensory awareness is evolutionarily advantageous, and therefore may have developed during an era in which danger was ever-present with survival depending on such capabilities. Evidence supporting the existence of extrasensory surveillance detection would have implications beyond purely scientific interest, yet the phenomena remains under-researched and may benefit from a fresh approach. A new study being conducted at the University of Greenwich is examining not only the possible existence of “psychic” detection—but also which psychosocial and neurological factors may predict this ability, as well as the belief in such phenomena.

The ability to detect attention has previously been restricted to the psychic staring effect, also known as *scopaesthesia*—a phenomenon in which people respond via nonconventional means to being the subject of another person’s gaze (Sheldrake, 2003). However this new investigation will further the research by incorporating the sense of being *heard* as well as seen, which we call *acoustesthesia*. The existence of these abilities will be gauged by the accuracy of participants’ reports of being watched and/or listened to, differences in their behaviour during surveillance, and physiological reactions determined by electrodermal activity (EDA) which measures the electrical conductance of the participant’s skin to indicate arousal. All participants will have the opportunity to detect being watched and/or listened to via all of these methods in a randomly assigned order.

During the experiment, participants are to be subjected to varying re-occurring conditions (a) not under any surveillance, (b) being watched, (c) being listened to, and (d) being watched and listened to. Participants will not be (conventionally) made aware that all of these conditions will occur, when they will happen, and if all the variations will take place. However they will be asked to report when they “feel” they are being watched and/or listened to so that these reports can be compared against actual periods of surveillance to determine reporting accuracy. Results will also be analysed to examine whether participants exhibit a physiological response to surveillance, and if any behavioural differences coincide with being watched and/or listened to.

Psychosocial and neurological factors which may be related to surveillance detection will also be investigated, and so participants’ paranormal belief, temporal lobe lability, and levels of schizotypy will be measured as both predictors of extrasensory ability and as possible explanations for reported anomalous experiences. This original and unique fusion of parapsychological, anomalistic, neuroscientific, and social factors represents an essential and progressive step in understanding possible extrasensory ability, as well as its psychosocial and neurological relationships. This paper presents planned research which will begin soon at the University of Greenwich.

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METHODS USED IN STUDYING THE PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP OF INDRIDI INDRIDASON—
QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF HIS PHENOMENA AND HOW THEY DIFFERED
FROM THOSE OF D. D. HOME AND RUDI SCHNEIDER [SPR]

Erlendur Haraldsson

The Experimental Society was founded by academics in Reykjavik to investigate the phenomena around Indridi Indridason. He (1883–1912) became a medium in 1904 when he accidentally joined the first sitter group in the country. The table started moving violently, he became afraid and wanted to leave. Automatic writing and trance phenomena followed. Detailed records were kept of Indridi's séances and the phenomena that were observed, such as levitations of objects and their movements in midair, some of them being musical instruments that were played upon at the same time by invisible forces. Sometimes the medium levitated, voices were frequently heard round Indridi who often sang, sometimes two together. Light phenomena of various forms and colors were seen. Sometimes a human figure was seen in a "pillar" of nebulous light, near as well away from the medium.

The Experimental Society made a contract with Indridi that his séances were only held for the Society. They were held in darkness or near-darkness and Indridi accepted any controls and precautions the Society requested. During violent poltergeist attacks many phenomena occurred in full light such as man-high levitations when he floated horizontal in midair.

At the séances one or two sitters held his hands and controlled his feet. In 1908 the highly skeptical Dr. Gudmundur Hannesson attended the sittings for several months. He imposed stricter controls, a tightly knit net separated Indridi and his "watchman" from the sitters. The net was fastened to the walls, roof and floor, with only a small slit allowing Hannesson and his assistant to slip through. The phenomena continued outside the net. Then he held sittings in his home, where Indridi had never been, where no music played and only with a few sitters he selected. Indridi had to undress and put on clothes belonging to Hannesson. The phenomena continued.

Protocols were kept of each sitting of the Experimental Society, and 58 of them still exist in two books along with various notes, totaling 300 handwritten pages. These protocols are comparable to those written by William Crookes and the Earl of Dunraven on D. D. Home's sittings. In 47 of Indridi's ordinary sittings 456 phenomena are mentioned, some described as occurring frequently. This amounts to at least 10 phenomena happening per sitting, sometimes over 40 were recorded. Voices of deceased or unknown persons were recorded in 77% of the ordinary sittings. A few spoke in a language not known to the medium: French, Norwegian, Danish, and Dutch. Next in frequency were inexplicable movements of objects occurring at 55% of the sittings. Raps or knocks were common (in 38% of the sittings), some of them made on demand. Also frequent was the experience of being touched or pulled as if by an invisible hand (36%). Light phenomena were common (28%) and came in different colors and shapes.

Analysis of the frequencies of the various phenomena among Indridi, D.D. Home and Rudi Schneider—about whom we have excellent detailed records—reveals a considerable difference.

There were also other differences, below a few of those between Indridi and Home:

Control personalities played important role in Indridi's mediumship, but little if any with Home.

Indridi's séances were held in darkness or near-darkness but phenomena also occurred spontaneously in full light. Home's sittings were conducted in normal light. In this respect Home was unique among mediums.

Indridi was in trance during his sittings and it usually took him a long time to wake up to normal consciousness. Home was sometimes in trance but often not, or in a very light trance.

Communications with deceased persons/spirits were much easier with Indridi, and mostly through trance speech, direct voice, or direct or automatic writing. With Home, communications were primarily

through alphabet (planchette) or raps, seldom through trance speech and rarely through direct voice phenomena.

With Home, communications or messages were short and telegram-style. They were generally much longer with Indridi and played a greater role. Failed séances, when nothing happened, were seldom with Indridi and more common with Home.

There was a period of violent poltergeist assaults with Indridi, but none with Home although undesirable influences are mentioned.

There were several cases of speaking in foreign languages with Indridi, but not with Home to our knowledge.

Indridi's mediumship lasted for five years (1904–1909), Home's for 25 (1851–1876). Indridi died 28 years old and Home reached the age of 53.

Contemporary reports about Indridi were published in Icelandic and Danish and reports on him presented at the first international conferences on psychical research held in Copenhagen and Warsaw.

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DISCUSSION ON THE METHODOLOGY OF WATER CRYSTAL FORMATION AS A DETECTION SYSTEM FOR PSI [PA]

Hideyuki Kokubo¹, Yasuyuki Nemoto², & Kimiko Kawano¹

[Introduction] Liquid water is an important matter for all creatures on the earth. Practitioners such as qigong masters and healers often claim that liquid water can react against psi or ki (qi). One such claim is that the form of a water crystal can be changed by human intent. However, there are few scientific studies that have tested this claim. In the present study, the authors have improved the methodology of earlier experiments and tried to construct a new experimental system that has less ambiguity than previous systems. **[Issue]** The authors considered that the methodology should be improved regarding the following points: the viewpoint of judgment is changed from an aesthetic factor to a morphological factor, the task of the experiment is adjusted to judgment, equalization of the conditions of crystal formation by use of paired experimental and control samples, the estimation of the extent of crystal formation by blank tests, and the complete survey of all photographs. **[Hypothesis]** If an operator gives his/her intent to an experimental sample of water, aiming to form hexagon crystals, the extent of hexagonal crystals formed will be different between experimental and control water samples. **[Methods]** The operator was S017 (a 47-year-old female) who was an expert healer but did not have any experience in water crystal formation tests. Bottled purified water (distilled water, 500 mL) was used for the experimental and control samples and two pairs were prepared; each pair used two plastic bottles. Moreover, a blank test (without the operator) was done one day before each main test. Fifty photographs were taken of the water samples prepared from each one bottle. So for each main test and each blank test, a total of 200 photos were taken for the samples prepared from the four bottles (two pairs of experimental and control sample bottles). The photographs were rated from a morphological viewpoint regarding the presence of water crystals by 18 to 20 students. The present study was done by a double-blind method. **[Results]** The number of photographs that included hexagonal crystals was not significant in the blank tests, while there was a significant difference in the number for the second main test ($p = .0095$, Fisher's exact test, two tails). **[Discussion and Conclusion]** The authors constructed a new experimental system considering the extent of natural fluctuation of crystal formation, and they succeeded in obtaining data which were less ambiguous than those of the conventional method. The present study does not deny a possibility that water crystal formation can be affected by intent. However, this possibility should be reconfirmed by more experiments, and the extent of natural fluctuation of the system should be estimated with sufficient accuracy.

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THE ALIEN IN THE FOREST OR WHEN TEMPORAL CONTEXT DOMINATES PERCEPTION [PA]

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Some German huntsmen came up with pictures taken from a wildlife camera and showing a strange humanoid-like object of about 10 cm size. The huntswoman who got in touch with us reported that the regular visit of a sample of wild boars stopped immediately after the occurrence of this strange object. She further emphasized that she and her colleagues had much experience with forest wildlife and with pictures from wildlife cameras, that they had examined and discussed these pictures extensively—also with other colleagues—and that all of them agreed that this object could not be a normal animal and that they also have taken paranormal explanations into account.

After a re-examination of the pictures we found a more plausible conventional explanation.

This case study is an interesting real-world example of our general perceptual problem: The sensory information available by our senses is a priori incomplete and ambiguous. We need to weight it with information from other sources in order to construct stable and reliable percepts. We summarize them in the following:

Memory content on a very long time scale: Faces are the earliest, most frequent, and the most important objects to look at in our life.

Social context on an intermediate time scale: influence of current media coverage (e.g., the report about a 13 cm large mummy, found in the Mexican Atacama desert about 2 months before the occurrence of the strange object).

Narrative factors on a short time scale: observed changes in the behaviour of wild boar before and after the occurrence of the strange object

Spatial context: Wildlife cameras are supposed to make pictures of wild animals. The probability to collect pictures of wild animals is thus considerably larger than that of aliens.

In summary, perceptual interpretations seem to depend on (a) the quality of the available sensory information and (b) available endogenous (memory, beliefs) and exogenous (spatial) context information. A conventional animal interpretation was obviously not available to the huntsmen and therefore the factors 1–3 dominated their perceptual interpretation.

Perceptual interpretations result from weighted (Bayesian) probabilities related to sensory input and to memorized perceptual experiences. This is obvious in the current case study, but it is probably also true but most often less obvious in our everyday life. If the sensory information is ambiguous or of low quality, perceptual interpretations can get paranormal, like in the current case. In some sense we are comparable to the inhabitants of Plato's cave but our perceptual system works well enough not to notice this.

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THE CORRELATION-MATRIX METHOD (CMM)—A NEW LIGHT UPON
THE REPEATABILITY PROBLEM OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

Walter von Lucadou

On the basis of the Model of Pragmatic Information (MPI) and Generalised Quantum Theory (GQT) an experimental method (CMM) has been developed in which the well-known decline effect of parapsychological experiments and their problem of repeatability are at least partially avoided by circumventing the nontransmission axiom (NT) of GQT due to a correlationmatrix technique. With this method many psychological variables are measured simultaneously before the start of a PK experiment and afterwards they are correlated with many physical variables of a physical random process which are also measured simultaneously during the PK experiment. This is done in two different settings, namely, with feedback and without feedback (control). Only the number of (significant) correlations between psychological variables and physical variables of the PK experiment are counted and compared with controls (runs without feedback or runs without subjects). Five independent studies support the assumptions of MPI and GQT that psi is no signal but a nonlocal entanglement correlation. It is argued that the results of many previous psi experiments which started from the classical Rhinean signal-model can be understood along the outlines of CMM.

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AT THE FRONTIERS OF KNOWLEDGE: A NEW GERMAN HANDBOOK
OF SCIENTIFIC ANOMALISTICS [PA]

Gerhard Mayer

The field of present-day anomalistics is dealing with a wide range of topics and specific questions that are controversial, or at least difficult to access, both due to theoretical and methodical reasons. Therefore, these topics are mostly excluded from mainstream science. They include extraordinary experiences of everyday life (e.g. near death experiences or crisis telepathy), altered states of consciousness (like ecstasy or religious trance), unexplained natural phenomena (e.g. ball lightning or mysterious Earth sounds), complex phenomena and other events of unclear or disputed origin (e.g. ghost apparitions, crop circles or UFO sightings) or even controversial cultural practices (ranging from astrology, alternative techniques of diagnosis and healing, to dowsing)—all in all phenomena and experiences at the borders of our seemingly well-grounded reality.

A new German handbook, which is published on behalf of the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) [Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health] in Freiburg, Germany and the Gesellschaft für Anomalistik e.V. [Society of Anomalistics] and edited by Gerhard Mayer, Michael Schetsche, Ina Schmied-Knittel, Dieter Vaitl (all IGPP members) is devoted to the broad research field of anomalistics. The purpose of the volume is to give a review of the research approaches, explanatory models, and methods of anomalistics, as well as a presentation of the most important fields of research with its particular issues in a concise manner. The underlying perspective of the book is based on the paradigm of *reflexive anomalistics* which can be characterized as follows: Being aware of (a) the epistemic features of the phenomena under research, (b) the methodological problems of scientific investigation related to these features as well as (c) the areas of tension between subjective evidence, scientific proof and social discourse—features which characterize this research field—and taking these factors systematically into account.

The anthology is supposed to fill the lack of a basic handbook regarding the topic of anomalistics in the German language, and to give as well an overview of the most important anomalistic fields of work; to raise thereby the public and scientific awareness for this research field in general; to point out and to discuss the methodological and theoretical problems of anomalistics in a concise manner; to set methodical standards for scientific anomalistics of future investigations.

The volume is aiming at a *broad* academic audience, and, furthermore, at lay people who are interested in the research fields and broader issues of anomalistics in general. It is divided into three parts: (a) Historical Development and Theoretical Debates (7 chapters), (b) Fields of Research (22 chapters), and (c)

Methodology and Methods (6 chapters). In addition, it includes an introductory chapter as well as a subject index.

The *Handbook* has about 500 pages. In total, 33 authors from different disciplinary areas (psychology, psychotherapy, sociology, physics, medicine, neurosciences, biology, chemistry, philosophy, theory of science, ethnology, history, science of religion) have contributed to this volume. The *Handbook* covers fields of research like altered states of consciousness, astrology, crop circles, precognitive dreams, near-death experiences, medical anomalies, experimental psi research, poltergeist experiences, UFO sightings, among others. The volume *An den Grenzen der Erkenntnis. Handbuch der Wissenschaftlichen Anomalistik* [*At the Frontiers of Knowledge. Handbook of Scientific Anomalistics*] is the first book of its kind published in the German language.

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PREVIEW OF THE ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA THAT FORMS PART OF THE BUCKMASTER PROJECT [SPR]

Robert McLuhan

I propose to take the opportunity of the July Conference to offer a preview of the online encyclopedia that we are working on as part of the Buckmaster project.

As the first stage in the planned “soft launch,” Council members will have viewed progress in late May or early June, by which time the main elements should be in place. Their feedback can be incorporated into the resource, which by July should have around 120 entries and will be sufficiently advanced for it to be introduced to the wider research community, prior to launching to the general public in October.

A 5-minute preface about the genesis of the Buckmaster project, and the aims of the encyclopedia in particular, will be followed by a 15-minute live tour, explaining the basic layout and navigation, describing the different sections (articles, case studies, lists, analysis, original reports, etc.) and showing some examples of entries. The discussion and editing section will also be explained, and the audience will be encouraged to start using it. This will leave 10 minutes for questions and general discussion.

It will be invaluable to have the opportunity to address the research community directly. Some conference visitors will have already written articles for the resource, and seeing it in action should stimulate more people to offer to contribute, and/or to get involved in the editing and improvement of existing articles. The feedback will also be helpful to provide any amendments that may prove necessary.

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METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES OF RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMISM — GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS TRIGGERED BY THE CASE OF KAI MUEGGE [SPR]

Peter Mulacz

The history of physical mediumism is—to an overwhelming extent—the history of fraud by cheating mediums. However, *it is not the role of the parapsychologist to explain how a medium has possibly faked phenomena*, yet the task of the parapsychologist is to study “genuine” phenomena and in order to be able to do so should undertake all possible state-of-the-art measures to secure the investigation against cheating and fraud.

To do so, it is necessary that all arrangements are in the hands of the parapsychological researcher.

Otherwise the parapsychologist is automatically restricted to the role of a passive observer because he cannot actively impose the control conditions he considers necessary and, even worse, his investigation will be obstructed by the conditions imposed on them by the medium or the circle leader as the medium's mouthpiece. The loss of control on the side of the investigators puts an end to any approach claiming to be a scientific one. This is the core problem in a setting where all arrangements are in the hands of individuals allegedly on "the other side," which means in practice that they are dictated by the medium. Permitting friendly ties between the investigators and the medium (fraternisation) aggravates this problem: It becomes difficult to tighten the control conditions as much as necessary. Particularly attending séances at home circles has but little value; *scientific séances must occur under laboratory conditions where the investigators are in control.*

State-of-the-art is videotaping under infrared illumination permitting séances to be held in the dark. Yet this is not a regimen curing everything and there are many details to be observed.

A continuous dimmed red light illumination should be used with the emphasis on "continuous" (as opposed to Mügge, who decides when to switch the red light on and off). Schrenck-Notzing was able to have his mediums get accustomed to the red light hence there is no reason why a medium nowadays should refuse it.

Moreover, there is an abundance of ideas, hints, and instructions in the older parapsychological literature as to how to prevent mediums from cheating. A cane chair should be used, the sounds of which would give the medium away if he moves around (Grunewald). Schrenck-Notzing, in his experiments with Stanisława Popielska, used a special "séance garment," a one-piece jumpsuit with gloves sewn onto the sleeves and a mesh hood covering the head. The mesh keeps regurgitated mock ectoplasm within the hood, while genuine ectoplasm is thought to be able to penetrate the mesh and appear outside of the hood. Karl Krall invented an electrical control apparatus, which was used in Schrenck-Notzing's laboratory and is similar to the apparatus built by Amereller for Harry Price. These are only a few examples.

In case a medium does not display any sign of preparedness to cooperate and to accept strict control conditions (which in case of a fraudulent medium is only understandable from his point of view) it is necessary to abort the investigation.

Finally, one needs to distinguish between deliberate fraud that is planned well in advance on one hand and "unconscious" fraud during trance, so-called "mixed mediumship," on the other. An example of the latter is Eusapia Palladino, who clearly stated that during her trance the urge to produce the phenomena was so strong that unless her extremities were controlled by the sitters she would rather use *them* instead of the obviously more demanding production of ectoplasmic limbs. Mügge's case is quite different from that of Palladino; like the historic case of the "flower medium" Anna Rothe, he features premeditated action undertaken prior to presenting "phenomena" later during the séance. Rothe was observed buying flowers from the market that would later "rain" from the ceiling as apports during the séance. Subsequently, she was put on trial and convicted of fraud. In Mügge's case, we have the fake cobwebs. *Where conscious and deliberate fraud occurs it is absurd to speculate whether some of the ostensible phenomena might perhaps be genuinely paranormal* (although the desire of some disappointed observers "to save what can be saved" is psychologically understandable) and it is a waste of resources—time as well as money—to continue investigations of such pseudo-mediums.

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"EXTRAORDINARY EVIDENCE" VERSUS "SIMILAR FACT EVIDENCE":
PROVING THE OCCURRENCE OF PSI OUTSIDE THE LABORATORY [SPR]

Alan Murdie

Despite extensive evidence from surveys and individual reports of the occurrence of psi phenomena beyond the laboratory in the wider world, such evidence is often dismissed as anecdotal. One justification provided

for such sceptical rejection is that “extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence” (Shermer, 1997).

Determining what may be considered “extraordinary evidence” is not a scientific exercise but a philosophical and social process, and it appears that this expression is used primarily as a skeptical sound bite in the context of psychical research and parapsychology, rather than any working principle for the analysis of data.

In legal terms, the courts in Britain, the Commonwealth and the United States do not recognise a concept of “extraordinary evidence,” which is a test which involves subjective judgment. What seems extraordinary to one person may be depressingly familiar to another more knowledgeable and experienced person and is likely to change with time (Salmon, 1974). Furthermore, merely to state that a claim or evidence is “extraordinary” does not provide a practical approach to assessing facts.

From a legal perspective, either there is sufficient evidence to prove a fact or there is not. However, the courts do recognize that the more unlikely an alleged event, the stronger the evidence has to be, expressed in terms of the probability or likelihood of an event occurring. Rather than shunning of so-called anecdotal testimony, the courts accept that collections of what may appear to be isolated facts or reports, emerging from the testimony of different witnesses, or from forensic traces, can constitute cogent proof to a standard beyond reasonable doubt.

Since 1894 across much of the English-speaking world, a principle known as similar fact evidence has been applied when proving the commission of serious crimes and offences (Makin, 1894). Similar fact evidence enables separated collections of isolated testimony to be taken together to act as cogent proof of guilt. The similar fact approach provides “a process of thought which an entirely rational, objective and fair-minded person might, depending on the facts, follow” (Glaisdale, 1973) including when assessing disputed scientific claims.

Similar fact evidence recognises that human behaviour follows patterns. In particular, similar fact analysis often plays an important part in securing convictions in serial homicide cases where there are often no living witnesses except the killer. Without a confession there may only be a collection of separated physical objects or traces, records and some isolated observations, or records of convictions for earlier crimes.

Collections evidence—whether from individual eye witnesses or not—which repeatedly reveal such consistent patterns may be admissible as proof of guilt or to rebut a defence such as accident or error. Treated alone, circumstantial pieces of evidence or events may not amount to sufficient proof in themselves—they may all be open to reasonable doubt. However, when all are taken together they may constitute powerful proof of guilt.

In cases of serial sex offenders, a single complaint from a victim of a sexual offence, particularly if it is from a young child, may not be considered sufficiently credible to sustain a conviction. However, when there is a collection of identical or similar complaints made by a number of different victims against the same individual, this can count as very powerful evidence in law. In similar fact cases, it has long been observed that offenders may display characteristic patterns, almost a personal “signature” or “hallmark” or modus operandi which identifies, them and no other, as the guilty party to an evidential standard beyond reasonable doubt. From a wider forensic and criminal investigation standpoint, such similarities provide a basis of offender profiling, where offenders exhibit certain patterns of behaviour related to their deviant psychological states.

This paper argues that the similar fact evidence principle, derived from practical jurisprudence, is one that may be utilised with assessing the data in psychical research, with particular reference to spontaneous cases. It may be used to assess both the claims of witnesses and the cogency of the evidence as a whole, the inherent probability or improbability of a disputed event being just one factor to be considered (Hale, 2008).

In particular, reports of poltergeist activity may contain many examples of what would constitute significant similar fact evidence in law. A similar fact approach may also be applicable to other claims of physical effects arising in the operation of psi, and in the wider assessment of meaningful coincidences. Existing collections of data accumulated by psychical researchers and parapsychologists over many decades may therefore constitute cogent evidence for the existence of psi effects if analysed from a similar fact approach. In place of proving the guilt of an individual, similar fact evidence provides a potential means

for proving the existence of anomalous effects to a high standard as far as any rational and practical theory of proof is concerned.

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A STUDY OF THE DIFFERENCES AMONG VIPASSANA MEDITATORS AND
NONMEDITATORS ON THE WEIRD COINCIDENCES SCALE-2 [PA]

Chetak Nangare

This study is “A Comparative Study among Vipassana Meditators and Nonmeditators on the Weird Coincidences Scale-2.” Participants (30 Vipassana meditators and 30 nonmeditators) completed the Weird Coincidences Scale-2 by Coleman and Beitman (2009). Research on the Weird Coincidences Scale-2 was aimed at determining if there existed a difference between the two groups under study, i.e., Vipassana meditators and nonmeditators. Weird Coincidences was the variable measured. The result obtained showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups. Since this author predicted such, the formulated hypotheses were supported. Hence the conclusion reached by the present study was that while weird coincidences commonly occur among the general population, there is an observable difference among the Vipassana practitioners and the nonpractitioners, an observation which also opens up the possibility that an increase in the level of sensitivity for such experiences will emerge for those who exercise Vipassana meditation in practicum.

The result was calculated with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 21.0 version in Windows. A *t*-test was used to determine the scores. The obtained score in the *t*-test for equality of means was 0.053, thus, on .5 scale, the null hypothesis was rejected and therefore it was concluded that there is a difference between the mean score of Vipassana meditators and nonmeditators at 5% significance level. This rejection of the null hypothesis was also proved by Mann–Whitney *U* test of nonparametric statistics in results.

From the scoring about the ratings of the coincidence sensitivity level, it can be seen that the overall score in between 27–34 represents the “Average” level whereas the overall score in between 35–38 represents the “Sensitive” level. The mean score of Vipassana meditators was 36.800 and the mean score of nonmeditators was 32.733. Accordingly, it was concluded that Vipassana meditators show the “Sensitive” level while nonmeditators show the “Average” level about the Weird Coincidences. The acquired overall mean score of all the samples obtained was 34.767 which represents the Sensitive level. Thus, it proves that weird coincidences commonly occur in the general population.

The hypotheses formulated regarding the variables of Weird Coincidences were all supported. To get the summary of interviews, in the online form of WCS-2, I included the question of whether the participant believes in psychic powers or not. Twenty-eight out of 30 participants in the Vipassana meditators group reported that they believe in psychic powers while 26 out of 30 individuals in the nonmeditators group reported the same. It means that 54 out of 60 participants reported positive for this question. Thus, irrespective of meditative experiences and spiritual authority, people tend to believe in extrasensory experiences commonly.

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SYNCHRONICITY AND PSI: A CONTROLLED COMPARISON [PA]

John Palmer

The first purpose of the study was to compare scores on an ESP task and a synchronicity task presented in counterbalanced order. The second purpose was to test competing hypotheses that possibly significant

scores on the synchronicity task are better explained by the principle of synchronicity or by psi. The targets were personally meaningful messages taken from a pool used for Psyleron's SyncTXT application. For each of 40 trials in both tasks, the participant selected the target via a computer mouse click that activated a Psyleron hardware REG influenceable by psi. A computer algorithm not influenceable by psi then selected three control messages from the pool. Then, participants were shown four rectangles containing the statements and asked to select the correct target as in a standard free-response ESP test. The two tasks differed in four fundamental ways. (a) The ESP task was clearly presented to participants as a test of their ability to use psi to guess which rectangle was the target; the synchronicity task was described as a test of the principle of synchronicity. (b) In the synchronicity task, the statements were visible (black on white); in the ESP task, the messages were invisible because they were in the same white color as the background; (c) In the ESP task, the dependent variable was a "guess" of which (apparently empty) box was the target; in the synchronicity task, the dependent variable was the personal contemporary meaningfulness of the statement to the participant. (d) In the synchronicity task, the participant rated each message for personal meaningfulness.

Both prior to and following completion of the two tasks, participants were asked which task they expected to score higher on and their confidence in scoring high on that task. They also were asked how many synchronistic experiences they had in real life. They then filled out Levenson's Multidimensional Locus of Control Scale (MLCS). After debriefing, the participants received feedback of their scores on the computer screen, not in the presence of the experimenter.

In general terms, the psi interpretation of a significant mean on the synchronicity task would be favored by significant correlations between psychological correlates of an ability and scores on both tasks. The synchronicity interpretation would be favored by a significant lack of correlation between the psychological predictors and scores on the synchronicity task combined with corresponding significant correlations for the ESP task. The psychological predictors were pre-test confidence of success on the synchronicity task and the Chance subscale of the MLCS.

There was nonsignificant below chance scoring in both tasks and the difference was also nonsignificant, which means that a precondition for comparing the psi and synchronicity interpretations of the synchronicity results was not met. Tests of the predictions were nonetheless performed and none were significantly confirmed. However, there were several significant post-hoc effects that are noteworthy. For both tasks (but most clearly for the ESP task), the higher the initial confidence, and the greater the decline in confidence from the beginning to the end of the session, the lower the paranormality score. This decline in paranormality scores with declining confidence was interpreted as resulting from an increasing doubt in the capacity of the tasks to capture a paranormal effect. As for the synchronicity task, it is reasonable to expect this doubt to be especially evident in people with some "expertise" in synchronicity as a result of having many synchronicity experiences themselves. This can explain why participants who reported frequent synchronicity experiences were less confident of success on the synchronicity task at both the beginning and the end of the session, and found the messages less meaningful overall, than participants with infrequent synchronicity experiences.

Among those participants who did the synchronicity task first (SE condition), there was a negative correlation between the average meaningfulness rating of all the messages and synchronicity scores, offset by a positive correlation between these ratings and ESP scores. The negative correlation was attributed to frustration in having to choose a target from a set of messages all or most of which seemed meaningful; the ESP task, boring as it may have been, was a relief in comparison, engendering a more positive frame of mind leading to more positive scoring. This hypothesis can also explain the significant negative correlation between synchronicity and ESP scores in the SE condition.

Meaningfulness ratings correlated positively with posttest confidence on both the synchronicity and ESP tasks. This result was interpreted as a high level of meaningfulness in the messages convincing participants that "something paranormal was going on" in the study.

There was a significant positive correlation between synchronicity hits and the average difference between the hit and miss trials in how long participants waited for the "right time" to access the target message on the synchronicity task. Frustration was also offered as the explanation for this result: When the

internal signal to click the mouse to access the target did not come quickly, participants became impatient and this negative mood state caused them to miss the target.

Finally, the ESP scores correlated significantly negatively with a composite measure of external locus of control combining scores on the three MLCS subscales; participants with a strongly internal locus of control scored high on the ESP task. This result was interpreted as the mirror image of the expected (but not found) tendency for participants with an external locus of control to score positively on the synchronicity task.

It was concluded that neither the psi nor the synchronicity hypothesis was confirmed by the data. However, the significant post-hoc correlations of synchronicity scores with measures of psychological variables that one would expect to be associated with success in applying an ability or skill are more consistent with psi being the operative mechanism in the synchronicity task. Even though one of these post-hoc effects had an astronomically low *p* value, all the significant results and their interpretations should be considered tentative pending replication.

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UNCANNY COMMUNICATION, PSYCHOANALYSIS, AND THE POROUS MIND [PA]

Janine de Peyer

This paper examines the phenomenon of “uncanny” or “telepathic” communication between patient and analyst as seen through the lens of contemporary psychoanalytic theory and practice. How far have contemporary Freudian-based theories expanded their view toward accepting the possibility of “Psi?” Drawing on a sequence of “uncanny” clinical events between patient and therapist, the author will examine the interface between contemporary psychoanalytic theories of unconscious communication (informed by neuroscientific advances) and theories of “telepathic” dyadic unconscious communication within the field of parapsychology.

Beginning with scrutiny of the therapist’s unbidden “slip of the tongue” that seemingly ushered-in otherwise unknowable information about her patient, de Peyer will explore the potential opportunity that such moments of “uncanny” communication offer toward a deepening of the clinical exchange. The impact of a sequence of moments of “uncanny” dyadic exchange will be described, elaborating on how patient and therapist internalized the intimacy of these exchanges with both positive and negative outcomes. While inspiring feelings of closeness, these moments also inspired fear of a lack of boundaries between patient and therapist, in which their respective private thoughts and experiences could be potentially invaded. The author will describe how these “uncanny” exchanges, and the discussion that ensued between patient and therapist, affected the patient’s on-going treatment. While the patient longed throughout her life to be implicitly “read” by someone, de Peyer explores the paradox between their clumsy day-to-day verbal exchanges replete with misunderstandings and misattunements, and their seamlessly intimate moments of apparent “uncanny” nonverbal interconnectivity.

The importance of the impact of the therapist’s personal belief system about “psi” will be examined, focusing on the influence of whether therapist and patient “match” or “differ” in their belief systems, and how transparency or seeming neutrality on the part of the therapist will affect the patient’s experience of safety in the treatment relationship. The author advocates for the clinical importance of nurturing receptivity to the possible existence of “psi” within the field of psychoanalysis, both in order to expand psychoanalytic theorizing about forms of unconscious attunement, and to lessen the sometimes *a priori* inference of psychopathology often assumed when patients present with “exceptional experiences.”

While skepticism about “telepathy” endures, notions of unformulated, dissociated, sub-symbolic, implicit, right-brain, mirror neuron, and sensorial forms of attunement are furthering psychoanalysis’ mission to understand unconscious communication *beyond* words. In view of this interest in nonverbal attune-

ment, de Peyer invites a re-consideration of the divide between psychoanalytic theories and investigations into the paranormal and “telepathy.” Reasons for longstanding psychoanalytic resistance to the “uncanny” stem from the prevailing underlying material-based worldview purporting that “mind equals brain.” These concerns are reviewed along with common fears of the paranormal. The author suggests that clinicians’ ongoing effort to *consciously* engage with these fears will reduce the likelihood of such fears emerging in the consulting room in the form of *unconsciously* driven destructive “enactments.”

A review of psychoanalytic literature on the “uncanny” notes the prevalence of research into *nocturnal* “uncanny” transmissions (telepathic dreams), and highlights the comparative paucity of literature on “uncanny” transmission during *wakefulness*. Citations of various contemporary psychoanalysts’ work on wakeful anomalous transmission are offered, focusing predominantly on Elizabeth Lloyd Mayer’s (2007) book, *Extraordinary Knowing: Science, Skepticism, and the Inexplicable Powers of the Human Mind* in which Mayer offers an exhaustive investigation into the relevance of the “uncanny” in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Highlights from Mayer’s book advancing the link between psychoanalysis and physics offer examples of other respected analysts’ clinical experiences of moments of “extraordinary knowing.” In addition to introducing mind-matter studies conducted by the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Laboratory, Mayer focuses on a poignant example of “uncanny” interconnectedness offered by Robert Stoller in his posthumously published paper on “telepathy,” in which he describes remarkable incidences of telepathic dreams between himself and his patients, including (similar to de Peyer’s example), patients’ dreams that accurately depict incidents occurring concurrently in his own personal life.

Since the apparent “telepathic” communication illustrated in this paper takes place both *during* and *in between* sessions, de Peyer highlights the problem that “telepathy” presents to neurobiologists, since “telepathy” challenges traditionally upheld scientific boundaries of space and time by transcending recognized material physiology and the existence of *sensory* cues. The author engages these issues, questioning the boundaries of “consciousness,” the limits of “subjective experience,” and the neural basis for “meaning-making” and “self-awareness.” Neuroscientific constructs underpinning contemporary psychoanalytic theories of unconscious communication are discussed, drawing attention to limitations in the understanding of how two minds interconnect across time and geographical space.

In further explorations of the intersection between neurobiology and “telepathy,” de Peyer proposes a speculative model of the mind in which “censorship” of certain stimuli prevent mental destabilization through what might otherwise be experienced as overwhelming exposure to incoming data of other people’s thoughts, feelings, sensations, images and experiences. If the human mind is indeed considered “porous,” the material instrument of the brain would likely develop a mechanism to “filter out” these data in order to survive. The author explores the possibility that this “porousness” might be stimulated for some through heightened affective experiences such as dreams, songs, visual cues, prayer, smells, other sensory cues, including relationships involving intense emotional exchange. The view that some might be more susceptible to “leakage” through conditioning of early childhood trauma is explored, along with the potential that such “porousness” might become activated within the clinical situation itself.

De Peyer balances inconclusive hypotheses of the functioning of “telepathy” while maintaining her primary focus on the impact of anomalous experiences on the clinical exchange. By acknowledging the possibility that human minds might be more “entangled” than previously recognized, she endorses a cross-fertilization between psychoanalysis, neuroscience, quantum physics, and parapsychology. The contemporary psychoanalytic view of the analytic dyad as a variable multi-person field of inquiry is seen as a model quite compatible with Schrödinger (1935) and Radin’s (2006) theories of “entanglement.” De Peyer concludes that perhaps the metaphor of “borrowing a thought” from a unified field of shared knowledge (reminiscent of Carl Jung’s “Collective Unconscious”) is a system of thought that psychoanalysts in the coming future will more readily embrace.

WORLD VIEW AND INTERPRETATION OF EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH:
TOWARD A PLURALISTIC APPROACH [SPR]

Michael Potts

From its beginnings in the late 19th century, psychical research has taken a “scientific” approach to psi phenomena and putative evidence for survival of death. In addition, such an approach is said to be “unbiased.” The fear is that theoretical bias or philosophical presuppositions may cloud the psychical researcher’s interpretation of the data. Another fear is that allowing biases to affect science detracts from the objectivity of science. However, as philosophers of science have long known, bias is inevitable in science. There are methodological biases, such as the preference for laboratory experiments over field studies in both behavioristic and cognitive psychology as well as in parapsychology. Scientists who are “sheep” regarding psi get better results than those who are “goats” (the same applies to study participants). At a higher conceptual level, philosophical presuppositions inevitably influence the interpretation of scientific data, as in the case of Copernicus’ solar mysticism influencing his development of the heliocentric view of the solar system or William Harvey’s Aristotelianism influencing his focus on the heart as the central organ of the body and his subsequent discovery of blood circulation. The highest level of bias is one’s world view, one’s fundamental metaphysical views about the nature of reality. This sets limits on what kinds of entities a person believes can exist as well as having epistemological implications for what is knowable about nature. More importantly, one’s world view determines what one takes to be the prior probability of the evidence supporting a particular hypothesis. It is important to examine this issue in detail.

The notion of prior probability is used in statistics, especially in Bayes’ Theorem:

$$\frac{P(e/h.k)}{P(h/e.k)} = P(e/k) \times P(h/k)$$

That is, the probability of a hypothesis given evidence plus one’s knowledge of the world is equal to the probability of the evidence given the hypothesis and one’s knowledge of the world divided by the probability of the evidence given one’s knowledge of the world multiplied by the probability of the hypothesis given one’s knowledge of the world. Now a key issue in applying this equation is what counts as knowledge of the world. In part, this is because what one counts as knowledge of the world is world view dependent. Therefore, a materialist may hold that the world is limited to matter and energy, and that knowledge of anything more that exists other than matter or energy is either impossible or highly unlikely. A traditional theist holds that a deity created the universe, and if the deity is considered to be “spiritual” (i.e., nonmaterial), this means that according to theism, at least one nonmaterial being exists. A Spiritist in Brazil believes that there are spirits of the dead that exist and with which mediums can communicate. Thus, the prior probability of a survivalist interpretation of apparitional evidence, for example, would be significantly higher for a Spiritist than for a materialist. A Spiritist would also be more inclined to interpret apparitions as due to the activity of discarnate entities than due to the psychokinesis of a living subject. This is also generally true of Spiritist psychical researchers, whom more traditional members of the parapsychological community have attacked for their world view bias in favor of survivalist interpretation of the empirical data. A traditional Roman Catholic might interpret some apparitions as souls from Purgatory seeking to either show believers their pain so as to avoid their, albeit temporary, fate or to complete some unfinished business. Other world views can make a difference in the interpretation of the data: Cartesian dualism, Thomistic dualism, panpsychism, Mahayana Buddhism, or Fundamentalist Christianity all play a role in a person’s interpretation of the apparitional data, even if that person is a scientist. This does not mean science is totally subjective as Paul Feyerabend claimed, but it does imply that the relationship between world view and data is part of the equation that goes into a scientist’s interpretation of the data. Similar differences in interpretation of putative evidence for survival apply to poltergeist phenomena, mediumship, and cases suggestive of reincarnation.

Some psychical researchers may claim that elimination of all world view bias should be a goal of

science. That is impossible, since the very claim that one can be unbiased regarding world view in science is not a scientific position, but a philosophical one and part of one's world view. There is also an epistemological arrogance in such a view, for it excludes any other means of knowledge other than the narrowly "scientific." That approach would dismiss out of hand religious and openly philosophical interpretations of the data, and such an approach is wrong in theory and untenable in practice.

There are instances in which world view bias leads to bad science. For example, Alfred Russell Wallace tended to dismiss all data that did not support his spiritualist position. Thus a lack of bias in the sense of honesty with the empirical evidence is essential. There is a symbiotic relationship between world view and empirical evidence, just as a scientific theory and evidence share a symbiotic relationship, with theory affecting interpretation of the data and data affecting the development of a theory. The same is the case with world view—new data can result in a person rethinking one's world view. My claim is that one does not check out one's world view at the door when doing psychical research—and that this is not a bad thing.

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ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES, MENTAL HEALTH, CREATIVITY, AND PSI [PA]

Thomas Rabeyron^{1,2} & Olivier Charlet¹

This study explores the complex relationships between anomalous experiences, mental health, creativity and psi within a sample of 113 visual artists in three French art schools. Participants (63.6% of female; mean age: 21.46) first took part to a retro-priming task and then completed three questionnaires assessing anomalous experiences (AEI), mental health (SCL) and creativity (CCI). Results show no significant effect on the retro-priming task ($es = -.03$). Nevertheless, anomalous experiences ($r_s = .24$), and psi experiences ($r_s = .22$) were significantly correlated with retro-priming results. On the other hand, creativity as a whole did not lead to significant correlation with retro-priming and only the use of the analogies subscale ($r_s = .26$) led to a significant correlation with the psi task among the creativity subscales. Anomalous experiences as a whole were correlated negatively with mental health ($r_s = .43$) and positively with creativity ($r_s = .42$) confirming the high rate of unusual experiences in the artistic population as reported in previous studies. Finally, these findings are discussed with respect to their theoretical implications and propositions for future studies.

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BUILDING LINKS BETWEEN COMMUNITIES: ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESEARCH LABORATORY FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF MEDIUMSHIP AT THE ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE [SPR]

Chris A. Roe¹, David Bruton², Chris Connelly², David T. Saunders¹, & Rachel E. Evenden¹

Stansted Hall was gifted to the Spiritualists' National Union by J. Arthur Findlay MBE in 1954 with the intention that the buildings be used to establish a "College of Psychic Science." Stansted Hall was named The Arthur Findlay College and has established an international reputation for its educational programmes in mediumship practice and philosophy. Despite spiritualism being among the most evidence based of the major religions, these programmes have not always sought to engender a scientific approach to the

evaluation of empirical evidence gathered during mediumistic demonstrations. The President of the SNU, Minister David Bruton, has begun to address that shortcoming, initially by organizing a Science Day at the SNU's Arthur Findlay Centre in Stafford on 16th February 2013 that was intended to introduce the spiritualist community to the scientific research that has been conducted on the subject of mediumship and to suggest ways in which they might adopt a more scientific approach to their own practice and experiences. Contributors included Prof Chris Roe and Dr. Elizabeth Roxburgh of the University of Northampton and Dr. Matt Smith of New Buckinghamshire University. The event was extremely well received, with over 150 attendees providing very positive feedback. As a consequence, a Science Week was run at the Arthur Findlay College at Stansted Hall from 8–15 February 2014 that provided an opportunity for students to work with scientific methods that ranged from controlled experiments incorporating EEG measures to more qualitative but still rigorous approaches including surveys and questionnaires. A condensed workshop programme was run at the SNU's Stafford Centre on 20–22 February 2015, and plans are in place for a similar event in the Spring of 2016. The ultimate aim of these initiatives is to encourage collaboration between the spiritualist and scientific communities to further our understanding of the nature and phenomena of mediumship.

As a next step in the rapprochement between spiritualists and academics, the proposers have received permission from the SNU Executive Committee to convert space at the Arthur Findlay College into a permanent laboratory that can be used to conduct research with the cooperation of AFC Course Organisers and the International community of students who attend programmes at the College. This loft space includes two smaller adjoining rooms that may be arranged to provide additional research space, and a dedicated wet lab area that includes a sink and running water that can be used to prepare and clean physiological equipment such as EEG and EDA sensors.

Funding has been secured from sources including The SPR's Survival Fund, the SNU's Friends of Stansted Hall, and the University of Northampton to furnish and equip the space so as to allow meaningful cutting edge research to be conducted by appropriate persons. Materials have now been purchased and pilot work is underway to test equipment and associated software to ensure fitness for purpose. Permission has already been granted from tutors to recruit participants from among students attending residential courses at the AFC over the coming months.

In this presentation we will describe the collaborations that have taken place so far between the University of Northampton and the Spiritualists' National Union, including an outline of the aims and methods used to introduce spiritualists to the scientific method and to introduce researchers to the practitioner's perspective. We will provide an update on laboratory facilities and report on findings from initial pilot work.

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PERFORMANCE AT A PRECOGNITIVE REMOTE VIEWING TASK,
WITH AND WITHOUT GANZFELD STIMULATION [PA]

Chris A. Roe & Laura Hickenbotham

Recent research by the lead author has sought to incorporate ganzfeld stimulation as part of a remote viewing protocol. Initial research suggested that novice participants can successfully describe a randomly selected target location while in the ganzfeld (Roe & Flint, 2007). Subsequent replications compared ganzfeld performance with performance in a waking condition in a counterbalanced repeated measures design, and found that significant above chance performance occurred in the former but not in the latter (Roe, Cooper, & Martin, 2010; Roe, Hodrien, & Kirkwood, 2012). In those studies participants completed Pekala's (1991)

Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory (PCI) in order to gauge their responsiveness to the ganzfeld protocol, and of the 12 subdimensions ganzfeld performance correlated significantly with greater absorption in their subjective experience, lower physiological arousal and less internal dialogue (Roe et al., 2010) and Time Sense (Roe et al., 2012). Additionally, suggestive relationships were found between dissociative experiences scores and ganzfeld condition performance ($r = .238, p = .078$), and between openness to experience scores and waking condition performance ($r = .269, p = .054$), but not vice versa. The present study was an attempt to confirm those findings with a new sample of 30 participants and a new primary researcher (LH). Experimental trials consisted of two counterbalanced conditions as previously. Hit rate in the ganzfeld condition increased slightly to 43.3% (SOR z -score = 3.02, $p = .001$) whereas performance in the waking condition was at chance levels (HR = 26.7%, SOR z -score = .24, $p = .405$), confirming previous findings. However, we were unable to replicate the positive correlations between ganzfeld condition performance and PCI scores, nor previous correlations with scores on measures of openness to experience and dissociative experiences, although the association between openness to experience and waking condition performance was positive and of a similar magnitude to previous studies ($r = .203, p = .301$). In accounting for the failure to confirm a relationship between phenomenological shifts in conscious awareness while in the ganzfeld and performance at the psi task, the authors consider the possibility that success might have more to do with lab atmosphere, social interaction and excitement / expectancy rather than ASC induction itself. Future research is proposed that separates the elements of the “classic” ganzfeld protocol into relaxation and sensory habituation elements to explore their relative contribution to success.

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VARIETIES OF CHILDHOOD MALTREATMENT AS PREDICTORS OF ADULT PARANORMALITY [SPR]

Paul Rogers¹ & Emma Lowrie²

A number of studies suggest childhood trauma is associated, either directly or through an indirect (mediating) relationship with heightened fantasy proneness, with paranormal belief and alleged paranormal experiences in adulthood. In one study Irwin (1992) found global paranormal belief was associated with more intra-familial physical abuse with fantasy proneness a key mediating variable. Lawrence, Edwards, Barraclough, Church and Hetherington (1995) also found a direct relationship between childhood trauma—principally stemming from an unsettled home life but also, to a lesser extent, from intra-familial physical abuse—and adult paranormal belief. The same authors found intra-familial abuse, personal illness and loss either of a friend, of property or of loss of domestic security (from frequent house moves) all correlated with more reported paranormal experiences in adulthood. In other work, Ross and Joshi (1992) found childhood physical and sexual abuse were both triggers of alleged paranormal experiences in later life. More recently, Perkins and Allen (2006) found those reporting a history of extreme intra-familial physical punishment (e.g., punching, kicking, choking, or being tied up) had stronger global paranormal beliefs and more pronounced specific beliefs in psi, precognition, spiritualism, and witchcraft. Other studies report findings that are consistent with these trends (French & Kerman, 1996; Irwin, 1994; Rogers, Qualter, & Phelps, 2007).

The current study extends this line of work by examining the degree to which various types of childhood maltreatment—specifically neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, parentification and parental threats of rejection, abandonment and physical punishment—predict adult paranormality. Mediation analysis (with bias-corrected bootstrapping) offered partial support for hypothesised relationships. As expected, child sexual abuse had a significant, direct effect on adults’ self-reported anomalous experiences. Indirect relationships between childhood neglect, both sexual and emotional abuse, and benefits of parentification also existed for four outcome measures, namely anomalous experiences, beliefs, abilities and a

general New Age orientation. These were mediated by a proneness to vivid/realistic and to a lesser extent make-believe fantasising. Contrary to expectations, childhood physical abuse, parent or sibling focused parentification and parental threats of rejection, abandonment and punishment were unrelated to all anomalous outcome measures with one exception; rejection threats were directly associated with fewer fears of anomalous phenomena. These findings are consistent Irwin's (2009) Psychodynamic Functions Hypothesis; the notion that adult paranormality offers an adaptive, needs-serving mechanism for coping with an often trauma-induced sense of diminished control. Methodological issues and ideas for future research are also discussed.

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“MOST PEOPLE THINK YOU’RE A FRUIT LOOP”: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CLIENTS’ EXPERIENCES OF SEEKING SUPPORT FOR ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES [SPR]

Elizabeth C. Roxburgh & Rachel E. Evenden

Anomalous experiences (AEs) are those that “depart from our own familiar personal experiences or from the more usual, ordinary, and expected experiences of a given culture and time” (Braud, 2010, p.1). White (2001) has listed over 500 different types of anomalous experiences, including meaningful coincidences, out-of-body experiences, near-death experiences, mystical or peak experiences, and extrasensory perception, to name just a few. Research has shown that a high proportion of the general population believe in or experience AEs (e.g., Haraldsson, 2011; Pechey & Halligan, 2012; Ross & Joshi, 1992) that AEs can occur after negative life events (Rabeyron & Watt, 2010), and that common reactions can include fear, anxiety and distress (e.g., Eybrechts & Gerding, 2012; Parra, 2012; Siegel, 1986). In addition, individuals may have existential questions following the experience and not know where to seek support or worry that they will be labelled mad if they do. Few studies have explored the perspectives of clients who report AEs in terms of the process of therapeutic intervention and how this is managed by mental health professionals. This seems pertinent given a recent study investigating the counselling experiences of bereaved people who sense the presence of the deceased found that the majority of participants felt their counsellors were not accepting of their experiences or neglected to explore the cultural and spiritual aspects of the experience (Taylor, 2005).

The aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of clients who report AEs in secular counselling services so we are better informed about how AEs impact on mental health and how therapists have responded to such clients (e.g., What experiences have clients found helpful or unhelpful in terms of therapeutic intervention? Did they feel listened to and understood by their therapist?) Ethical approval was obtained from the School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee and ethical guidelines of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) were adhered. Semistructured face-to-face interviews were conducted with eight clients (three males and five females aged between 21 and 52 years with a mean age of 37 years) whom had experienced at least one AE which they had discussed in counselling. A thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was applied to the data and produced four themes: “You have to go digging to get support,” “Why are you looking at that airy fairy crap?” “It kind of shut the door,” and “Having someone to normalise and say you’re not crazy, you’re not weird.” Findings highlight the importance for clients of finding an open-minded counsellor so they can explore the meaning of the anomalous experience without being ridiculed or pathologised. Themes will be represented by participant extracts to demonstrate how they are grounded in the data and findings will be discussed in terms of their implications

for the therapeutic relationship, the accessibility of mental services to meet the needs of diverse clients, and the growing field of “clinical parapsychology.”

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THE SECRET OF MAGIC: A PSYCHO-, SOCIO-, OR PSI-SOMATIC EFFECT? [SPR]

Leo Ruickbie

Magic has, in “voodoo death,” an established phenomenon with documented cases from across different historical periods and cultures. The medical model proposed by Cannon (1942) explained the observed effects by the action of the emotion of fear on individual physiology. Additional nuancing suggests that wider social forces are also involved. However, anomalous cases exist that do not meet the specific criteria of a psychosomatic or sociosomatic response and instead invite parapsychological interpretation as evidence of distant mental influence, what is here termed psi-somatic effect. Taking “voodoo death” as a case study, this paper asks “what is the functional mechanism of magic?” Coined by Harvard physiologist Walter B. Cannon (1942), the term “voodoo death” describes the widely observed phenomenon of death by “magic,” that is, by performative ritual action. Looking beyond supernatural explanations, Cannon concluded that this worked by profoundly affecting individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour with fatal consequences. He suggested that “shocking emotional stress” could in extreme cases lead to “persistent excessive activity of the sympathico-adrenal system” resulting in death. Curt P. Richter (1957) later proposed “overactivity primarily of the parasympathetic system.” Drawing on new research, this paper will demonstrate that the phenomenon involves a wider set of relationships than a psychosomatic reaction, indicating additional and complementary sociosomatic or biopsychosocial (Engel, 1977) forces. Cannon, drawing on James (1905) and especially Warner (1937), recognised these additional conditions but did not explicitly account for them in his physiological model.

However, there are instances in the literature of “voodoo death” occurring when the necessary conditions outlined by Cannon were not present (e.g., Neal, 1966; St. Clair, 1971). These anomalies challenge Cannon’s interpretation and require closer analysis to determine their probable cause. A cogent rationale for considering psi effects in “voodoo death” is provided by Barry (1968) and the replication study by Tedder and Monty (1981), together with the similar experiment by Nash (1984). If all other psychological-physical mechanisms can be ruled out, then these cases may be proof of distant mental influence (psi-somatic effect); or, on the other hand, indicate a more complex, poly-somatic process involved in ritualised social interactions with profound implications.

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ESTABLISHING THE CSAPP ARCHIVES AND SURVIVAL CASE COLLECTIONS FROM THE EILEEN J. GARRETT LIBRARY [SPR]

David T. Saunders, Rachel E. Evenden, & Callum E. Cooper

In this talk we will report on two associated projects conducted by members of the Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes (CSAPP) with funding conjointly awarded for by the Society for Psychical Research’s Survival Research Fund to whom we are greatly indebted.

The first regards a recently obtained donation of paranormal research from a combination of several private collections, acquired by David Saunders and Callum Cooper (Cooper & Saunders, 2014). This

donation predominantly comprised of several decades of material from the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena (ASSAP) which Oxford University no longer wanted to house. The rest are personal collections, notes, letters, VHS tapes, and reel-to-reel and cassette audio tapes that were donated to CSAPP as a unified single donation. A considerable amount of the material mentioned is aimed at investigations of haunted properties (case files), electronic voice phenomena, psychic healing, theories of immortality and survival (predominantly from a Christian perspective) presented through psychical research organisations, plus sittings with mediums and a host of other material.

Secondly, in late 2014, the authors received a greatly appreciated invitation to visit the Eileen J. Garrett library held by the Parapsychology Foundation (PF) and contains a vast collection of rare archives comprised of books, journals, articles, case studies and media files, on a wide variety of topics of interest to any scholars of parapsychology. Saunders and Evenden intended to make use of these resources to better inform their own research through a gathering of cases which specifically focus on evidence pertaining to the survival hypothesis. For Evenden this takes the form of veridical evidence from sittings with mediums, and for Saunders veridical communication with the deceased through the medium of dreams.

In this talk we intend to present a summary of the contents of our archive and discuss the progress in documenting and converting the material into electronic formats so as to provide access for the use of SPR members and associates in their own research endeavours. A summary of our visit to the Parapsychology Foundation will be given, alongside the preliminary findings from our archival research.

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MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SUPERNATURAL: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS, SPIRITUAL AND PARANORMAL BELIEF [SPR]

Malcolm Schofield

The aim of the study was to establish a new typology of belief in the supernatural; categorising people based on their levels of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief. Examining how the various beliefs are defined was a further objective. The study examined the three concepts of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief in an attempt to examine how people mentally represent the supernatural. A new taxonomy of these three beliefs was posited. How these three beliefs have been defined and measured in the past was discussed. The various dimensions of each belief were further discussed making reference for example to intrinsic and extrinsic religious belief. The reasons for people having different levels of these beliefs were discussed, highlighting theories such as “Metaphysical Chauvinism” as a possible explanation. Previous research that used various methods to measure religious, spiritual, and paranormal belief were highlighted including several studies that used cluster analysis to examine such concepts. Participants completed an online survey consisting of three questionnaires measuring religious (Revised Religious Life Inventory), spiritual (Intrinsic Spirituality Scale) and paranormal belief (Revised Paranormal Belief Scale). An opportunity sample ($n = 307$) was used to conduct the three cluster analyses. The first was a replication of Irwin’s (1997) study that examined the subscales of the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS). The second and main analysis was on the three scales, The Intrinsic Spirituality Scale (ISS), The Revised Religious Life Inventory (RRLI) and The Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS). Finally a post hoc analysis was conducted on the ISS and the subscales for the RRLI and the RPBS. The results revealed a four-cluster solution for each analysis and each analysis was shown to have internal validity. For the main analysis the clusters were labelled as follows: cluster 1— “Believers,” cluster 2— “Sceptics,” cluster 3— “Conventional religious believers,” and cluster 4— “Questioning believers.” The four-cluster solution was discussed in relation to: firstly, the initial replication analysis and then to the *post hoc* analysis. The four-cluster solution for the main analysis was the labels applied to them were discussed. The theory of “Metaphysical Chauvinism” was supported.

However, the recommendation is that it should be renamed “Metaphysical Bias” noting that “conventional believers” may be less open to different ideas than their unorthodox counterparts. The clusters showed that four distinct groups emerged when cluster analysis was applied; however, it was acknowledged that there still appears to be a lack of consensus when defining supernatural beliefs. It is presented here that the cluster analysis approach is more effective than a simple scale that measures one area when trying to establish to *what* set of beliefs a person actually subscribes.

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AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS EXPLORING SYNESTHESIA
AS AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE: A CASE STUDY [PA]

Christine A. Simmonds-Moore

Synesthetic experiences occur when there is an additional involuntary sensory or conceptual response (or responses) to an inducing stimulus. By convention, such experiences are described in terms of the relationship between an inducing stimulus (the inducer) and an additional response (the concurrent) (Grossenbacher & Lovelace, 2001). Previous research has indicated a relationship between synesthesia and a range of exceptional experiences (ExE), including experiences which have been labeled as paranormal. Some have proposed that synesthesia may actually underpin or play an integral role in these experiences (Alvarado, 1994; Irwin, 1999; Marwaha & May, 2015; Williams, 1997). Case studies have also demonstrated an association between synesthesia and other cognitive and perceptual advantages. This paper is a phenomenological case study exploring what it is like to experience the world synesthetically, and how synesthesia can inform our understanding of ExEs and abilities. This approach was adopted in order to generate a deep understanding of the experiential world of one person who reports experiencing synesthesia and ExE and abilities. The approach is neutral regarding the ontological status of these experiences. The participant is a 27 year old caucasian American male (participant A). A reports several synesthesias which have color as a concurrent. Grapheme-color synesthesia is characterized by letters being experienced as uniquely colored. A experiences colors for both individual letters and words. A also experiences several forms of sequence-color synesthesia, including time-color synesthesia whereby each day and month in the year have a unique color and music-color synesthesia where individual keys and notes have different colors. He also reports other higher level synesthesias whereby mathematical concepts and functions, songs and genres of music each have different colors. Finally, he experiences colors for the emotions of other people (akin to an aura experience). A also reports having an exceptional memory ability, a mathematical ability and has experienced both lucid dreams and precognitive dreams. A semistructured interview concerning his experiences with synesthesia and ExEs was carried out in a quiet room on the campus of the University of West Georgia. The interview lasted approximately one hour. The interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed for its semantic content (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyze the transcript. The transcript was read through several times prior to analysis to become deeply familiar with A's experiences with a view to capturing meaning and implied meaning. The IPA resulted in the identification of five main themes, which can be summarized as: (a) relationship with synesthesia, (b) complexity/kaleidoscope of representations, (c) access to meaning, (d) control of synesthesia and manipulation of representations and (e) exceptional abilities. In summary, A lives with multiple synesthesias which influence his conscious experiences, his dream life, his creative life, and his interactions with social others. A's social experiences include experiences of color in musical improvisation, colors (auras) for the emotions of social others (experienced around their bodies) and precognitive dreams, which reflect the experiences of important social others. Such experiences have been part of his experiential world since he was a child and appear to be complex and interconnected. The synesthesias bestow an ability to represent (and access meanings associated with) subtle and abstract aspects of his lived experience. Although this research

is neutral in terms of the ontological status of A's ExEs, it is of note that they are experienced in a similar way to some of A's other exceptional abilities, and appear to be facilitated by attributes of his synesthesia; a sensitivity to nonverbal aspects of the world (which may or may not include genuine psi phenomena) and very strong, long-lasting mental representations which are both accessible and subject to some manipulation. A's relationship with his synesthesia has evolved over time, and seems to be tied to his sense of self and identity, and in particular to emotions and other nonverbal ways of being. These experiences were initially appraised negatively, and actively hidden or suppressed as he sought to *become normal*. As his relationship with his synesthesia has evolved, he has begun to experience his synesthesias and the exceptional abilities associated with them in an increasingly positive light. AM's synesthesia is now an integral and positive part of his life; he is at ease in discussing his experiences and displays excitement when he describes these aspects of himself, particularly with regard to music.

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“IT HAPPENS TOO FREQUENTLY FOR IT TO BE COINCIDENTAL”: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS
OF TELEPHONE TELEPATHY EXPERIENCES [SPR]

Lesley-Ann Smith, Callum E. Cooper, & Jonathan T. Ryan

Telephone telepathy refers to the experience of thinking of someone who soon afterwards calls unexpectedly on the telephone (Sheldrake, 2000). This particular anomalous experience of what appears to be telepathy actively occurring in the real world is commonly reported, with many people professing to have experienced this at least once in their life (Brown & Sheldrake, 2001; Sheldrake, 2000; Sheldrake, 2003a, pp. 95–109).

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TESTING THE PAGAN PRESCRIPTION: USING A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL TO
INVESTIGATE PAGAN SPELL CASTING AS A FORM OF DISTANT SPIRITUAL HEALING [SPR]

Chairmaine Sonnex, Chris A. Roe, & Elizabeth C. Roxburgh

The aim of this paper is to present ongoing research investigating the effects of Neo-Pagan healing spells as a form of distant spiritual healing. Neo-Paganism is an umbrella term for a number of different “traditions” with nature worship, magical beliefs and individualism at their core. It is a fast growing belief system in the UK with numbers of people identifying as Pagan on the UK census doubling between 2001 and 2011 from 42,262 to 80,153 (Office for National Statistics, 2012).

When defining Wicca, one of the larger traditions in Neo-Paganism, Janet and Stewart Farrar (1981) state “As a Craft, its purpose is to achieve practical ends by psychic means for good, useful and healing purposes” (p. 12). When Willin (2007) studied Wiccan spell craft he noted that healing was considered to be an important aspect and when questioning practising Wiccans he found that 50% of respondents used the word healing in answer to the question “What form does it (magic) take?” Willin also found the word healing was mentioned by many respondents in answer to other questions. In spite of this importance of healing in Neo-Paganism, no scientific studies have been conducted to look at its effects. However, previous research investigating the efficacy of spiritual healing practices has been sufficiently successful to warrant further study (Astin, Harkness, & Ernst, 2000; Byrd, 1988; Roe, Sonnex, & Roxburgh, 2015; Sicher, Targ, Moore, & Smith, 1998).

A double-blind randomised controlled study is currently being conducted to ascertain if there is evidence of healing effects as a consequence of being treated by experienced Pagan practitioners as they conduct distant healing rituals for specified persons. Various aspects of the design of the study were informed by previously conducted interviews with Neo-Pagan practitioners. The trial utilises an interrupted time series design in which participants attend sessions at the University weekly for four weeks. Participants are randomly assigned to either group A or group B, with group A receiving healing in week one, after the initial session to capture baseline measures and group B receiving healing in week two after the second session.

The experimental design was informed by an earlier interview phase of the project in which practitioners were asked about their practice with particular focus on necessary or sufficient conditions, how effective spell work manifests and limits, etc. From these interviews it emerged that practitioners required some form of representation or symbol of the “castees” as well as some indication of the issues they would like to see resolved. Thus, participants were asked to provide a picture and a personal item that was passed to the practitioner along with a “spell request” in which the participants indicated the changes they would benefit from. Practitioners indicated in the interviews that the belief of the castee can have a mediating effect on the efficacy of the spell and so in the first week participants were asked three questions to establish their level of belief.

Practitioners also explained that although spells have specific targets, holistic effects are often evident therefore the WHO Quality of Life Scale (WHOQOL) is being used as an outcome measure. The WHOQOL comprises 26 items, which measures quality of life across four broad domains: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment, and is thus able to capture any holistic effects.

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THE MEANING OF ECSTASY [SPR]

Richard Squires

I would like to propose a paper for presentation at the annual conference based on my essay “The Meaning of Ecstasy.” This essay, which has been published in the UK in *Performance Magazine*, in the US in *Gnosis Magazine*, and online in *The Journal of Wild Culture*, is an account of a spontaneous out-of-body event that I experienced as an actor on stage, in the middle of a dance-theatre performance of a stage adaptation of the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. It is also an attempt to relate that experience to the original practices of Greek tragic theatre: to ask if it is possible that the original purpose of this ritual theatre in honor of the god Dionysus was to produce by design the out-of-body experience then known as ecstasy.

The witch doctor’s dance in which my OBE occurred had been added to Washington Irving’s story to suggest the primitive and barbaric surroundings of the early colonial settlers and the fragility of their hold on civilization. I leaped into a circle of settlers grouped in prayer around a fire, dancing wildly, hypnotizing them one by one with my rhythmic and guttural shouts, delivered to the ominous beat of an Indian drum. The actors resisted the assault for as long as they could, but in the end they all succumbed to my frenzy, and the finale of the scene had us whirling about the stage in a kind of mad, leotard-clad, St. Vitus Dance.

I was in the midst of one such assault when suddenly, without warning, I found myself in the steel rafters at the top of the room. I saw the girders loom up through the shadows, and I was startled to see that my vision had changed when I looked at the spectacle down below. I could see everything in the room—every hair on every head it seemed—simultaneously. I absorbed it all in a single omnipresent glance—hundreds of heads arranged in wavering rows of portable chairs, a half dozen babies sleeping in laps, hair of different colors, reflecting the light on stage. Then my attention shifted to the stage, and there we were in our colored leotards, whirling about in our dance, and there I was—there I was—face to face with the actor Gary Carkin.

I was in two places at the same time. I understood it in a moment, and felt a rush of panic. And then an instant later I was staring into Carkin's eyes again, and felt my feet pounding the floor, my voice shouting, my lungs straining. Until he finally gave in and the scene was over.

One day years later I chanced upon a book at the Library of Congress that established a connection between my experience on stage and the ritual ceremonies of Dionysus, god of theater in ancient Greece. The book was *Psyche*, Erwin Rohde's great study of primitive Greek religion. Reading his chapter on the "Origins of the Belief in Immortality: The Thracian Worship of Dionysus," I came to a passage describing the worship of the Maenads ("wild ones") of Dionysus, and discovered something utterly different from everything I'd known about Greek religion:

"The worshippers ... burst the physical barriers of their soul. A magic power takes hold of them; they feel themselves raised high above the level of their everyday existence; they seem to become those spiritual beings who wildly dance in the train of the god.... The whole might be called a religious drama. These extraordinary phenomena transcending all normal experience were explained by saying that the soul of a person thus 'possessed' was no longer 'at home' but 'abroad', having left its body behind. This was the literal and primitive meaning understood by the Greek when he spoke of the 'ekstasis' of the soul in such orgiastic conditions of excitement."

Was it possible that the first tragic actors simply followed the lead of the Maenads in cultivating circumstances that would lead them into states of enthusiasm and ecstasy? Were the religious ceremonies that we now call theater, originally dedicated to the mad god Dionysus, Lord of the Underworld, founded in part so that actors could be granted the glimpses of the immortality that it was his province to bestow? Although it isn't widely known, the original Greek tragedies were fierce exultant spectacles that made strenuous physical demands on the actors; closer to dance-opera or dance-oratorio than to what we now call drama. Practically every word in them was sung, and every note had a dance step to accompany it.

The state of emotional exhilaration from the sense of a divine infusion of energy is still one of the most powerful attractions of the theater for an actor, even if the words used to describe the experience are no longer the same. When actors talk of a magnetic performance, a charged audience or an electric house, the words they use are literally true. Many an actor's life has been transformed by the concentration of the psychic and electrostatic energy of the audience upon his person.

Imagine an actor playing Oedipus the King, standing in the orchestra of a Greek theater, a chorus of a dozen men dancing around him in a frenzy to the pounding music, to evoke the unspeakable suffering that he's endured. A spellbound audience of fifteen thousand people watch as Oedipus himself, reeling, dancing, in the center, rips his eyes out with his hands and wails:

"O! O! O! They will all come, they will all come out clearly!"

In the intensity of such a cry, and its effect upon the shivering nerves of the audience, one can begin to imagine the enthousiasmos of Dionysus, the Lord of Souls. And that this enthousiasmos would be followed from time to time by ecstasy seems reasonable enough to me.

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THE EFFECT OF SUPERSTITIOUS THINKING ON PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS RESPONSES AND PERCEIVED TASK PERFORMANCE [PA]

Wan Yee Teo¹ & Nicola Lasikiewicz²

Paranormal belief is defined as belief in phenomena, which are scientifically unsubstantiated (Irwin, 2009). Superstitious thinking refers to a subset of paranormal belief, which refer to the belief that there is a causal link between action and outcome when no such causation exists (Matute et al., 2011; Thalbourne, 1997). Previous research suggests that people tend to invoke luck-related superstitions in stressful situations as an attempt to gain an illusion of control over outcomes. Based on this, it has been suggested that superstitious thinking may become more common in times of challenge, stress and uncertainty (Burger & Lynn, 2005;

Keinan, 1994, 2002). Although previous research suggests that stress may influence the propensity for superstitious belief and that this belief may lead to enhanced performance, gaps in our knowledge remain. Specifically, (and to the authors' knowledge) no study has explored the influence of superstitious thinking on responses to an acute psychosocial stressor and further, whether exposure to stress would subsequently increase belief. The current study, therefore, aimed to explore whether belief in a 'lucky' pen would influence the psychological response to stress in the form of the Trier Social Stress Test (TSST) and whether endorsement of belief would increase following stress exposure. Further, the impact of superstitious belief on perceived task performance was explored. Participants ($N = 114$) aged between 17 and 59 years ($M = 22.98$, $SD = 4.57$) from James Cook University Singapore, were recruited and randomly assigned to one of four conditions: (a) no-stress with no "lucky" pen; (b) no-stress with a "lucky" pen; (c) stress with no "lucky" pen; (d) stress with a "lucky" pen. The results revealed that participants provided with a "lucky" pen to complete the task reported lower state anxiety throughout the experimental session and more so after speech preparation, regardless of whether they were exposed to stress or no stress control. Further, those exposed to stress and in the nonsuperstition activation condition reported significantly higher state anxiety than those who were exposed to stress and told that the pen they could use was "lucky." In terms of performance, participants exposed to stress and given a "lucky" pen perceived their performance to be significantly better than participants exposed to stress without the "lucky" pen, specifically in the speech preparation phase and interview phase but not during the mental arithmetic phase. A trend for superstitious thinking to increase post stress exposure was also observed and more so in those given the "lucky" pen but this observation just missed significance. The findings suggest that use of the "lucky" pen may have evoked superstitious thinking and altered the psychological appraisal of stress. The results corroborate existing research that belief in transferable luck may help an individual to psychologically cope with a stressor via illusory control. Hence, luck-related superstition is a unique coping strategy that could be beneficial in enhancing personal appraisal of task performance.

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DIGITIZING THE JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

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Until now, only a few back issues of the *Journal of Parapsychology (JP)*, continuously published since 1937, have been available to the members of the Parapsychological Association (PA) and the members of the Rhine Research Center (RRC) in digital format. Other digital sources provide access to more back issues, but the product suffers from poor contrast, limited page views per month, and/or limited navigation functionality. The aim of the project described here is to digitize all missing back volumes of the *JP* and provide them to the PA and the RRC in good quality, intended for distribution without page viewing restrictions. The digitization is being done on a voluntary basis.

The vast majority of the back volumes were transported from the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) [Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health], Freiburg, Germany, where a complete set of *JP* volumes is kept in its library, to a volunteer at the Justus Liebig University (JLU) Giessen, Germany, and returned to the Institute either in person or, for practical reasons, via interlibrary loan. All volumes were scanned on a photocopier at the Bender Institute of Neuroimaging (BION), JLU Giessen. To obtain consistent quality, fixed exposure and resolution settings (300 ppi) were used. Grayscale images of the scanned two-page spreads were saved as a multi-page TIFF file and converted to individual PNG files, using ImageMagick 6.9, for processing with lossless compression, that is, compression allowing perfect reconstruction of the original data.

In Adobe Photoshop 13, the rectangular marquee tool was set to a fixed size for each volume—corresponding to the spread size—to obtain images of the same size, using a width in pixels that is divisible by two. Using batch processing for the most part, the spreads were then selected and the images cropped. Care was taken that the binding edge ended up close to the center of the image to avoid accidentally trimming page content in the next step. The files were then duplicated and the image size clipped to half width, alternately starting on the right and left side of the image, using batch processing to obtain images of single pages. Suffixes were then added to the filenames using a batch renaming tool, after which the files containing left and right pages were merged.

The digital image of markings, library stamps, coarse dirt and dust was erased by hand. Using batch processing, the intensity levels of the images' highlights and shadows were adjusted using fixed values, so that the text was made black and the background white while preserving much of the dynamic range. Figures and multi-color elements (i.e., elements with multiple gray tones) were selected separately and their intensity levels of highlights and shadows were adjusted using values that slightly lessened the reduction of the dynamic range.

Images with text only were saved as indexed color PNG files with eight colors, using Photoshop's perceptual color reduction algorithm, to obtain an optimal compromise between tonal range and file size. Images with figures and/or multi-color elements were saved as indexed color PNG files with eight colors or more to limit the reduction of the tonal range.

Tweaking tools, such as DeflOpt, defluff, PNGOUT, pngwolf, TruePNG, and ZopfliPNG, were applied to reduce file size by removing optional data chunks, implementing optimization processes such as applying optimal filters for compression, and increasing lossless compression. Optimal settings were selected and a large number of optimization iterations were processed, which resulted in an optimization run time of about two minutes per file on what is currently a high-end desktop computer. The PNG metadata section relating to physical pixel dimensions (*pHYs* chunk) was retained so that Adobe Acrobat would produce pages of the correct size.

Using Adobe Acrobat 10.1, the PNG files were combined into one PDF file per volume. Compression was set to ZIP format, which is lossless, to preserve the quality of the already compressed files. Optical character recognition (OCR) was applied to the PDF files to make the text searchable and so that it can be copied. The primary OCR language was set to "English (US)." To retain the original images with no loss in quality, the PDF output style was set to "Searchable Image (Exact)." The recognized text, added as a hidden layer, was not corrected for recognition errors.

In the Callas pdfToolbox 7.6, all the *.notdef* glyphs, which are inserted by OCR, were removed to ensure compatibility with PDF/A format. In Acrobat, a bookmark was added manually to the first page of each journal section and the zoom level of each bookmark was set to "inherit" when a jump to a bookmark destination occurs to facilitate document navigation. So that the PDF files would be in a format that is suited for long-term digital archiving, they were saved in PDF/A-2b format using the sRGB color profile. In Fsum Frontend 1.5.5, a secure hash algorithm (SHA-2) checksum was calculated for each PDF file to enable the detection of eventual data corruption.

The digitization of the *JP* provides a cost-effective and high-quality model for future digitization projects. The use of a wider tonal range than usual results in improved legibility and better OCR results. Yet the size of the PDF files remains relatively small (about 100 MB per volume) because the size of the image files was optimized. The images show no compression artifacts because PNG files were used. Importantly, the scans are preserved in PDF files to demonstrate to the user that it is safe to quote the digital *JP*; such images are not present in some other digitized anomalistic or transpersonal journals. Although only a few digital journals now use PDF/A format, this format seems to be a good choice for long-term digital preservation.

Digital journals are today essential for the dissemination of scientific thought. Unfortunately, there are still several parapsychological journals that are unavailable in digital format, either in whole or in part. Furthermore, accessibility to what is available is in some cases very restricted. It is hoped that this description of the *JP* digitization project might serve as a model for similar projects.

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PSIHUB—A USER-FRIENDLY BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASE OF PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL PERIODICALS WITH BUILT-IN SEARCH ENGINE AND RUSSIAN/ENGLISH INTERFACE [PA]

Sergii Vakal & Igor Bombushkar

Background. The availability of comprehensive bibliographic databases and comfortable search engines is one of the most important factors determining information turnover within a field of study. For example, an implementation of Pubmed/Medline system manifold accelerated exchange of information and knowledge-ability of investigations of other researchers within the biomedical field. Currently there are no exhaustive publication databases indexing all known journals in the field of psi studies. The best among available databases are Lexscien and Scopus, but even they are not customized for parapsychology (although Lexscien deals with exploratory science). Moreover, none of available databases contain articles of journals printed in Russian, so Western researchers can hardly read classic and modern investigations performed on post-Soviet territory. Furthermore, non-English speaking researchers from Eastern Europe can not access a huge amount of data accumulated by Western parapsychologists. Here we describe our recent step towards the solution of above mentioned problems.

Purpose. To develop simple and user-friendly, but comprehensive and versatile bibliographic database of parapsychological periodicals with built-in search engine and bilingual (Russian-English) interface.

Methods. First of all, a list of professional parapsychological journals to be indexed was taken from a recent review of nonconventional periodicals written by Malakhov (2013). A list of additional relevant articles was formed on the basis of Hövelmann's (2009–2014) bibliographic summaries. In parallel, the electronic library with more than 5,000 articles in the field of psychic studies was constructed and archived at the Ukrainian Center for Parapsychological Research. Russian articles were manually translated into English by the staff of our Center. Development of the site framework was performed on the basis of modified CMS WordPress during January–March 2015. Search builder (advanced search option) was created manually by basic PHP programming.

Results. A bilingual bibliographic database entitled *Psihub* was developed and put online at <http://psihub.org/en/>. As of the end of March 2015, 357 abstracts were manually uploaded totally. The first version of the site contains abstracts to selected articles from *Parapsychology and Psychophysics*, the *Australian Journal of Parapsychological Research*, the *Journal of Parapsychology* and the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*. According to indexation plan, more than 1,000 abstracts will be uploaded until the 1st of July 2015, and the whole library of the Center will be uploaded over the next two years.

The main menu of the site contains links to a brief description of the database and developers, a list and short description of parapsychological journals subjected to indexation, short articles meant for familiarizing users with basic parapsychological concepts, and a few help pages containing a detailed glossary, English-Russian and Russian-English dictionaries and a FAQ. Each journal can be screened separately. In the right panel, one can find a list of recommended articles as well as a search history (available for registered users). There are two types of search—simple and advanced; the latter allows users to search target words in specific fields (title, journal, keywords, etc.) and even construct search queries with logical operators. A page with search results consists of abstracts with bibliographic data. Feedback and “Ask a question” forms, as well as links to useful resources are also present and easily accessible.

Scheduled updates. A prominent increase of total number of indexed articles; an extension of the electronic library through an indexation of the WISE World Resource Center Digital Library; improvement and bug fixing of the search engine; large-scale translation of English abstracts into Russian and vice versa; implementation of deeper rubrication and user-accessible adjustments of the results page; transfer of the site to faster hosting, which will allow it to handle multiple queries in parallel.

Conclusions. A simple and user-friendly bilingual database *Psihub*, containing abstracts from parapsychological journals and a built-in search engine was developed and put online. Next steps regarding improvement and enlargement of the database were scheduled.

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KANT AS A SPIRIT-SEERS DEFENDER: A DIFFERENT APPROACH [SPR]

Alma López Vale

In 1766 the well-known philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote a less—or almost not—known essay entitled “Dreams of a Spirit-Seer.” In this text Kant was based on the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. In some moments of the text, Kant was very critic with Swedenborg, but there are also other parts that are more complex. Traditional readers of Kant deny this open-minded possibility and try to eliminate this interesting essay of the panorama. But, after all, *Dreams* is still here. This early text is being full studied known in an attempt to understand some points of Kant morals that are doubtful. But it is also the necessity of doing an integrated study of this important author and the amount of text about him that are in the background of this different type of study.

In this paper I will show—or even try to do it—how this “different” Kant could be understood. For this purpose I will examine the essay, especially some controversial parts of it that contradict the traditional point of view. In my opinion, Kant was almost respectful of ghost-seers, although his theoretical construction has to deny the knowledge of spirits. However, he is near to affirm that spirits actually exist and that they should be trusted. Even only near—of course, because of his own philosophical system—his treatment of the whole thing take more risks than anyone could imagine before reading the full text. Kant left space for the possibility of a broader study and, definitively, why did he work hard in reading the voluminous Swedenborg’s books? But also, why did he write the essay? And, moreover, why did he publish it?

This questions in conjunction with a nontraditional, but open-minded reading of Kant’s essays are signs of the interest that the spiritual world woke up on Kant, but there are quite more evidence that supports my point of view. In this presentation my goal is show in what sense the sentence “Kant defended the existence of spirits” was fully true as how this approach can modify the following history of spiritualism—or, at least, our reconstruction of that history. I am not saying that Kant thought about the possibility of having actual knowledge about ghost or spirits, because as is commonly known we are limited as human beings. But there are two mixed things: on the one hand, the world of things that we can know scientifically and rationally; and, on the other, the group of things that can only be felt or sensed.

The world of spirits gives humans hope in the way of life and, in doing so, they are functioning as moral guides, so we can believe in them. I would say more according with Kant—almost with my own interpretation of him: We should do it.

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PRECOGNITIVE DREAMING: A REPLICATION STUDY USING AN INNOVATIVE AND EFFICIENT DIARY CHECKLIST METHOD [SPR]

Caroline Watt, Milan Valášek, & Emma Mark Donald

Several researchers have used dream diary methods to test the hypothesis that people's dreams can predict future events. For example, Besterman (1933) had 43 percipients document their dreams upon awakening and mail a copy to the SPR. The percipients were asked to notify the experimenter if they subsequently noticed any events occurring that corresponded to their dreams, and 45 such events were reported. Out of 430 submitted dreams, Besterman judged just two to represent a "good case" in support of a paranormal interpretation.

Diary studies have the advantage that participants sleep in their home environment rather than in a costly sleep laboratory (e.g., Watt, Wiseman, & Vuillaume, in press). However, as Besterman noted, diary studies are inevitably hampered by the difficulty of evaluating the likelihood of a match between submitted dreams and subsequent events. Essentially, the degree to which there is a match is a subjective judgement.

In 1967, Jackson proposed a new and more objective method for testing precognition in dreams. In Jackson's method, two groups would use dream diaries. Group A would be exposed to a special waking experience after one week, whereas Group B would have no special waking experience. Group B's dreams would therefore provide a comparison or base-rate, controlling for the effects of the special waking experience. Jackson also recommended that emotional material would be more likely to have a strong effect on dreams.

In 2010, Schredl, Götz, and Ehrhardt-Knutsen published in the *JSPR* a pilot study using an innovative variation upon Jackson's method. In Schredl's experiment, all participants were asked to dream about a forthcoming target experience (a short film) and to keep a dream diary over the preceding week. At the end of the week, participants were randomly allocated to Group A or Group B, and each group viewed a different film. The film shown to Group A was labelled Film A; and Group B's film was labelled Film B.

Unusually, Schredl used a quantitative method to record the dream contents and to score the similarity between dreams and the target films. The films had been chosen to have contrasting but intense emotional themes. One film depicted emotionally negative themes of death, the other positively toned film referred to Buddhism and mountains. Before the study commenced, Schredl prepared an adjective checklist depicting the thematic contents of each film. For example, the "death" film was characterised by adjectives such as "murder," "anxiety," "being trapped," and negative emotions; the "mountains" film was depicted by adjectives including "feeling free," "nature," "snow," and positive emotions. Participants were given response sheets with all of these adjectives randomly ordered. Therefore, rather than give a narrative description of their dreams in their diaries, participants were asked to depict the nature of their dreams by ticking whichever adjectives applied. Schredl predicted that if participants' dreams were influenced by the future target experience, Group A would check more content related to Film A than to Film B, and Group B would report more content consistent with Film B than to Film A. The results provided statistically significant support for the hypothesis of dream precognition.

Schredl, Götz, and Ehrhardt-Knutsen's (2010) pilot study method has several efficient features. First, many participants can be tested at the same time. Second, the checklist method allows quick recording of dream contents and quantitative scoring of the degree of similarity between dreams and the target and decoy films. Third, each group can act as the other's control, so the control is empirical rather than against mean chance expectation. We therefore decided to conduct an experiment at the University of Edinburgh using the same methodology, to see whether we could replicate these positive results.

Participants: As with Schredl and colleagues' study, the participants were undergraduate psychology students ($N = 26$, 20 female). Their average age was 19.8 years.

Target materials: Two contrasting films (approximately 20 mins duration) were chosen as target material. One film "Beastie" was a tongue-in-cheek boisterous music video by the Beastie Boys. The other film "2081" depicted a dystopian future in which able-bodied people had their capabilities artificially hampered. CW and EM created adjective checklists to reflect the contrasting themes of each film.

Procedure, hypotheses, and analyses: Participants were asked to complete the adjective checklist to describe their dreams each morning for one week. They were told that their goal was to dream about the film that they would view at the end of the week. They were not aware that there were two possible films. Participants were allocated to groups, and after EM had collected all the checklists, she then randomly

selected which film each group would be shown. We hypothesised that Group A would check a greater number of content variables associated with Film A, compared to Film B; and that Group B would check more content variables associated with Film B, compared to Film A. Logistic random-effects models (to account for statistical dependence since each subject contributed several data points to the analysis) were used to test these hypotheses.

Results: Data collection has been completed and the results of this replication study will be presented for the first time at the conference. We will submit a full report for publication in the *JSPR*.

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CONNECTING WITH THE DEAD: ASSESSING THE PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF SPIRITUALIST MENTAL MEDIUMS [PA]

Lauren Wellbourne & Ciarán O’Keeffe

The current literature for the personality characteristics of Spiritualist mental mediums is limited, and so, the differences in measures of personality between Spiritualist mental mediums, Spiritualists, and members of the general public were investigated as a partial replication of Roxburgh and Roe’s (2011) research. The current study aimed to explore whether Spiritualist mental mediums, Spiritualists, and members of the General Public would differ on measures of personality: extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, creativity, fantasy proneness, and paranormal belief. Scores of these measures were calculated using the NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992), the Creative Behaviour Inventory (CBI; Dollinger, 2003), the Creative Experiences Scale (CEQ; Merckelbach, Horselenberg & Muris, 2001) and the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS; Tobacyk, 1988). Participants were obtained using selective sampling (mediums) and opportunity sampling (spiritualists and general public); consisting of 81 Spiritualist mental mediums, 82 Spiritualists and 78 members of the general public. A one-way MANOVA found a statistically significant difference between the three groups on the combined dependent variables, $F(5, 234) = 11.33, p = .000, \eta^2_p = .19$: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. Similarly, a Kruskal-Wallis Test found a statistically significant difference between the three groups on scores of creativity, $\chi^2(2, n = 241) = 24.40, p = .000$. Whilst, an additional Kruskal-Wallis Test found a statistically significant difference between the three groups on the scores of fantasy proneness, $\chi^2(2, n = 241) = 12.18, p = .002$. Lastly, a one-way ANOVA found a statistically significant difference on scores of paranormal belief, $F(2, 238) = 232.39, p = .000$; therefore the hypothesis was accepted. Post-hoc analyses using a standard multiple regression found that “age” and “belief in spiritualism” predicted 63.3% of the variance of paranormal belief.

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ARE THEY REALLY TALKING TO YOU? INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN EVP EXPERIENTS [SPR]

Ann R. Winsper, Paul Rogers, & John E. Fisk

This report contains the results from the first two studies of a PhD looking at Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP). The purpose of these first two studies is to define an EVP experiencer, then to create a profile of an EVP experiencer compared to a nonexperiencer.

Study 1: The Paranormal Investigation Experience Questionnaire (PIEQ) was devised to evaluate experiences of EVP and devise a measure of “EVPness” —a measure of people’s belief in, and experience

of, EVP. Participants were also asked to complete two measures of paranormal belief, a personality scale, an afterdeath belief scale, and basic demographic details. It was predicted that EVP believers (EVPers) would score more highly than non-EVPers on the measures of paranormal belief, life after death, and the Openness personality factor.

Four questions were identified from the PIEQ that related directly to the participant's belief in EVP as a paranormal phenomenon that facilitates communication with the spirit world. Respondents were categorised as non-EVPers, low-EVPers and high-EVPers.

As hypothesised, EVPers scored significantly higher on measures of Traditional Religious Belief and specific beliefs in Psi, Spiritualism, Precognition, Witchcraft and Extraordinary Life Forms (cf. Tobacyk, 2004) as well as Anomalous/Paranormal experiences, beliefs, and claimed abilities (cf. Gallagher et al., 1994) than did non-EVPers.

By comparison, low-EVPers showed most fear of anomalous/paranormal phenomena (cf. Gallagher et al., 1994) with non-EVPers showing the least. This suggests that fear decreases with experience of EVP within EVP experiencers.

Finally, EVPers were significantly more likely to endorse specific beliefs that the afterlife incorporated disembodied spirit (i.e., consciousness continues after death but identity and body do not survive), spiritual embodiment (i.e., identity and consciousness survive death but the body does not), reincarnation, bodily resurrection and belief/behaviour efficacy (i.e., actions and beliefs affect what happens after death), and less likely to accept that total annihilation followed death than were non-EVPers.

Factor Analysis: An exploratory factor analysis of the PIEQ questionnaire was carried out with four factors extracted. These were interpreted as Interaction (i.e. EVPs responding to EVPer); Important Messages; Pleasantness; and Knowledge of Source. High-EVPers found EVPs significantly more pleasant than low-EVPers, which may correspond to the higher Fear of the Paranormal scores displayed by low-EVPers.

Study 2: Study 2 was designed to assess the extent to which EVPers are prone to various forms of psychopathology, namely, reality testing, dissociative experiences, fantasy proneness, hallucinations, schizotypal traits, death anxiety, and narcissistic personality.

High-EVPers scored significantly higher than low-EVPers on the agreeableness personality factor. All EVPers scored higher than non-EVPers on the fantasy proneness scale and the hallucinations scale (specifically the auditory hallucinations and sleep related hallucinations subscales). Low-EVPers scored significantly lower than non-EVPers on the exploitativeness subscale of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory scale (Raskin & Terry, 1988).

There were no significant findings for schizotypy, reality testing, dissociative experiences, or death anxiety.

Scores on a number of the scales increased with increasing EVPness, which suggested that the higher the EVPness of a participant, the more likely they are to display traits that have been described as typical of high paranormal belief. However there were some important exceptions, particularly the measure of positive "happy" schizotypy—this has been described as higher in paranormal believers; however, in common with a previous study looking at EVPers (Winsper, 2010), the current study showed no significant differences between high-, low- and non-EVPers. The findings from these studies will be discussed in detail and relevant findings and implications will be discussed.

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PANEL: ROADS TAKEN—SOME CAREER PATHS IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

Chair: James C. Carpenter¹

Panelists: Eberhard Bauer², Stanley Krippner³, Deborah Delanoy⁴, Mario P. Varvoglis⁵

A young scholar or scientist considering parapsychology in a serious way might find the prospect daunting. There are hardly clear-cut career paths available. Yet some examples from others may help. Here a small group of parapsychological elders tell of the paths they have found in pursuing their work.

I DID IT MY WAY—AUF DEUTSCH

Eberhard Bauer

I had the chance (or the good luck) to start to work at an already established institution, the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP for short) [Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Mental Hygiene] which was founded 1950 in Freiburg i. Br. (Germany) by Hans Bender (1907–1991), at that time professor of psychology (including border areas of psychology) at Freiburg University, who became my academic teacher. When I started in 1970, Hans Bender was the most prominent representative of academic parapsychology in (West-)Germany. As a young psychologist I was introduced to a broad spectrum of parapsychological issues which had to do with research, counseling, and information. Among my academic duties was to teach introductory parapsychological seminars for psychology students. What I've learnt during my career was that parapsychology is no place where one can find easy answers or is a field that offers easy chances for an academic career (if one has this in mind). A basic requirement is a regular education in one of the conventional sciences. Given the still very controversial nature of parapsychology and the acrimonious quality of the ongoing debates connected with this field, I think an outspoken tolerance for "cognitive dissonance" is an absolute prerequisite. After the IGPP was funded in 1992 by the Holler Foundation in Munich (the credit for that goes entirely to Bender), I was fortunate enough to help to expand the interdisciplinary activities of the IGPP and to realize some of the original goals connected with the founding of the IGPP. But I frankly confess that such a development is indeed a very rare event in the history of parapsychology, at least in Europe, perhaps containing the flavour of paranormality itself.

TWO BRANCHES OF THE ROAD TAKEN

Stanley Krippner

The first branch occurred at the University of Wisconsin when I chaired the Student Union Forum Committee and we decided to invited J. B. Rhine as part of our lecture series. This led to an invitation to visit the Duke University Parapsychology Laboratory and the rest is part of my personal history. The second branch occurred at Northwestern University when a group of graduate students requested an informal seminar with Gardner Murphy following his lecture to the psychology department. When Murphy heard that I planned to be in Hawaii that summer, he invited me to be his graduate assistant at the social psychology courses he planned to teach at the University of Hawaii. Again, the sequel led to my direction of the Maimonides Medical Center Dream Research Laboratory.

A PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL CAREER—A LUCKY HAPPENSTANCE?

Deborah Delanoy

While not part of a career path per se, two factors that influenced my later pursuit of parapsychology included experiences that lead to a "natural," unquestioning acceptance of psi, and potentially related phenomena, from a very young age. Other related experiences came from being an adolescent/young adult in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960s.

I worked in San Francisco after my first degree and, after having established a business career, I took time out to do a PhD focused upon parapsychology as a mature student at the University of Edinburgh. Fortunately, post-PhD, I was offered jobs at the newly founded Koestler Chair by Bob Morris and at PRL by Chuck Honorton; I chose the former.

I then spent 13 years as a Research Fellow with the Koestler Parapsychology Unit (KPU), including job-sharing with Bob the role of Visiting Professor at the IGPP in the mid-late 1990s. Since a career as a university researcher is a difficult role to sustain, I left Edinburgh to take up the post of Professor of Psychology at the University of Northampton (then Northampton University College). There I worked my way up the academic ladder having roles that included being a research leader for a subject area (psychology), then for a small school, then for a much larger school, then became Associate Dean for the School of Social Sciences, in charge of all research and postgraduate education among too many other things. I retired in 2010 as an Emeritus Professor at Northampton. Also, I had a short period as a “Visiting Professor” at Edinburgh University when I moved back to Scotland.

PARAPSYCHOLOGIST, PRINCETON TO PARIS

Mario P. Varvoglis

I'll be talking about the four key phases of my life in parapsychology :

1. student volunteer at the Maimonides Hospital Dream Laboratory, where Chuck Honorton and associates launched the early Ganzfeld work;
2. research associate at Princeton's Psychophysical Research Labs, working on the auto-ganzfeld, microPK and theoretical issues;
3. independent researcher in France, developing and testing game-like psi tests and a general public educational CD-ROM named *Psi Explorer*;
4. President of the Institut Métapsychique, the principle parapsychological center in France.

CHASING A QUESTION

James C. Carpenter

I became immersed in parapsychology in the early '60's at Duke University at the Parapsychology Lab. I had gone to Duke to learn about it and I did, and got to know Rhine and Pratt and the others in that remarkable place. I had many formative experiences there, the strongest being the tight bonds I formed with a small group of others about my age that Rhine was also grooming as his heirs: Honorton, Morris, Stanford, and Rogers. Ed Kelly, Kanthamani, and John Palmer joined the band a little later. We became very tight and shared lots of ideas and friendship and kept up our ties after we left Rhine's lab. I was uncertain about parapsychology as a career and went to another love, clinical psychology, but have kept up parapsychology as a secondary pursuit ever since. First mainstream teaching and research and then clinical work have paid the bills while I persisted in research part-time. I will talk about chapters of work at UNC where I taught for several years, then at FRNM and the Rhine Center, and then my own research and theoretical writing and activities with the PA.

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PANEL: THE EMERGING FIELD OF PARANTHROPOLOGY [PA]

Chair: Serena M. Roney-Dougal¹Panelists: Jack Hunter², Stanley Krippner³, David Luke⁴

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PARANTHROPOLOGY

Jack Hunter

Initially a brief overview of the fields of transpersonal anthropology, the anthropology of consciousness and, the most recent development in this lineage, paranthropology will be presented. It will outline the contributions of these fields to the development of a new approach to the investigation of so-called non-ordinary realities which emphasises the need for ethnographers to participate in the transpersonal practices and experiences of their fieldwork informants. In the words of Edith Turner, the anthropologist must learn to “see as the Native sees” in order to truly grasp the experiential foundations of religious and spiritual belief, and escape from the hegemonic dismissal of alternative ontologies. This talk will explore the limitations of traditional anthropological approaches to the study of religion, which often fall short of providing a satisfactory account of the richness and complexity of ethnographic reality and will offer suggestions for ways to overcome such problems.

EXPLORING THE APPARENTLY PSI-CONDUCTIVE BUT METHODOLOGICALLY ELUSIVE
NATURE OF RITUAL PSYCHEDELIC USE

David Luke

Field reports from explorers, anthropologists, and ethnobotanists have long since attested to the apparent psi-inducing properties of shamanic plant psychedelics, such as the Amazonian *decoction ayahuasca* and the mescaline-containing cacti San Pedro and peyote. After reviewing the literature an initial experimental precognition protocol was developed for use in field research and piloted in Brazil and Ecuador with participants who were taking part in ayahuasca rituals. The preliminary findings did not provide evidence for precognition under the influence of ayahuasca; nevertheless, a number of methodological issues became apparent from conducting the study that may account for the findings. Taking into consideration problems identified with the test protocol a new experimental design was developed and was planned for use with participants under the influence of San Pedro cactus in a ritual context; however, the implementation of the second protocol was hampered by cultural rather than internal design factors, and an alternative solution was sought by testing the protocol in principle using just one participant, with encouraging findings. The process of, and problems associated with, conducting and developing experimental field research with participants utilizing plant psychedelics in a ritual context are discussed and proposals for future research are put forward.

METHODOLOGY OF DOING PSI RESEARCH IN OTHER CULTURES
AND THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL BELIEFS

Serena M. Roney-Dougal

Taking a parapsychology experimental procedure and adapting it to the culture in which one is working is tricky and takes time. The experimenter needs to live for a sufficiently long period of time with the participants in order to begin to appreciate their perspective and gain their confidence. The experimental methodological rigour needs to be maintained whilst one works within the participants' cultural experience. In my research in India with Yogis and Tibetans it took 2 years to create a procedure with which the participants

were comfortable. An example from the yogic research: in the first year the students scored in the psi-missing direction. Discussions with them revealed that compliance is very important for students with a teacher. They knew that the hypothesis was that the swamis would score better and so they had unconsciously attempted to comply with this. Bringing this unconscious factor into the open resulted in chance scoring by the students in the following year—an improvement on the psi-missing.

With the Tibetans, the methodology was similar to their practice of mirror Mo divination. However the targets had to be specially prepared for them as appropriate for their life experience which was without radio and television. Therefore static targets of Tibet were prepared and in the second year changed to pictures of Tibet and India, as pictures of Tibet were too uniform. However, even though the Tibetans were now living in India, some of the targets were outside of their life experience. For example, one monk during the session saw a flower filled meadow. When he was viewing the four pictures one was of a rock pool. He had never seen the sea. We explained that these were underwater flowers, for example, sea anemones, and he immediately identified this as the target, since it was the closest to his meadow!

TWO MORE SESSIONS WITH AMYR AMIDEN, A BRAZILIAN CLAIMANT MEDIUM

Stanley Krippner

In 1994, I was a member of an interdisciplinary team that spent 8 days studying Amyr Amiden, a Brazilian claimant medium. During 20 sessions, 97 possible anomalous events were observed, 91 of which were rated “apparent anomalies” on the basis of a 5-point rating scale filled out by three members of the team. When the mean ratings per event were correlated with physiological and geomagnetic readings, 2 of the 10 correlations were statistically significant: elevated diastolic blood pressure and elevated geomagnetic activity (using the geomagnetic index for the Southern hemisphere). My follow-up visit the following year was marked by additional apparent anomalies as was an additional visit in 2014. One of the most unusual apparent anomalies was the sudden appearance of a pair of linked metal rings. Brazilian culture in general and Amiden’s family background in particular were felt to be conducive to his behavior.

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PANEL: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF PSI [PA]

Cochairs: Patrizio E. Tressoldi¹, Julia Mossbridge², Thomas Rabeyron³

Panelists: Anabela C. Ventura⁴, Flavio Burgarella⁵, EvanLab Team⁶

THE MANY ADVANTAGES OF PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Julia Mossbridge, Thomas Rabeyron, & Patrizio E. Tressoldi

In their recent paper “Future directions in precognition research: more research can bridge the gap between skeptics and proponents,” Franklin, Baumgart and Schooler (2014) stated: “The most convincing demonstration would be to show tangible effects applied in real-world settings. If a paradigm can make accurate predictions about events that people consider important and are incapable of predicting using standard means, then the significance of the paradigm becomes self-evident.” In this panel we will address this point by presenting different practical applications across multiple fields.

BUILDING A SMARTPHONE APP FOR PRESENTIMENT EXPERIMENTS: RESULTS THUS FAR
AND LESSONS LEARNED

Julia Mossbridge

Data from human presentiment experiments show a consistent pre-stimulus physiological difference between two upcoming stimulus types (e.g., arousing versus neutral) in a random sequence of stimuli. While this predictive anticipatory activity or PAA could potentially be produced by lingering responses to previous stimuli or an expectation bias effect, analyses designed to rule out such an explanation have not supported this idea. Nonetheless, the possible influence of previous trials and/or expectation about future trials makes presentiment or PAA less palatable to mainstream scientific audiences, reducing the funding available for this important line of research.

One solution is to present a large group of participants with only one stimulus each, while recording the physiological variable before, during, and after the presentation of this single stimulus, as has been suggested by several researchers. The drawback of this approach is that it is difficult to obtain participants who are willing to go into the lab for a very brief experiment.

To address this problem, I have built an Android app that uses the built-in camera to detect interbeat intervals (IBIs) in much the same way an oximeter works—by tracking the changes in red color in the user's finger. Around this physiology engine, I have built single-trial software that presents a countdown and a potential monetary reward at the end of the countdown.

Pilot results from a preregistered exploratory experiment in 150 male and 150 female adults suggest that the gender difference previously shown in skin conductance measures obtained in the laboratory for single-trial data (Mossbridge et al., 2012, Figure 6) is replicated in interbeat intervals, such that there is a significant gender interaction between the change in IBI preceding a win-versus-loss for women and that preceding a win-versus-loss for men.

I will discuss these data as well as the lessons learned for the process of building smartphone/smartwatch/smartband physiology apps that can take advantage of presentiment or PAA to help users predict upcoming events of importance.

PSI APPLICATIONS: CAN WE TAKE CONTROL OF PSI?

Thomas Rabeyron

Even though several meta-analyses have produced significant effect size of psi in controlled conditions (Bem & Honorton 1994; Storm, Tressoldi, & Risio, 2010; Mossbridge, Tressoldi, & Utts, 2012), we still don't understand precisely its ontological nature and psi remains an elusive phenomenon (Kennedy, 2003). Consequently, mainstream psychology does not consider the existence of psi as being proven (Wagenmakers, Wetzels, Borsboom, & Van der Maas, 2011) and significant progress does not seem possible as long as a scientific theory of psi won't be proposed. Such a theory would need to improve the reliability of psi effect and help to understand its biological and physical underlying processes. But several epistemological and empirical obstacles have prevented so far such an aim.

One of these obstacles is the influence of the experimenter: as soon as we suppose the existence of psi, there are no clear boundaries between the experimenter and his object of study. Consequently, we can hardly know if the results we obtain are a reliable characteristic of psi phenomena or a psi influence from the experimenter beliefs and expectations (Schlitz, Wiseman, Watt, & Radin, 2006). Thus, even if some results seem plausible [e.g. sheep-goat effect (Lawrence, 1993), noise reduction model (Storm et al., 2010), etc.], the psi experimenter "breach" prevents solid progress as in other scientific fields. A second obstacle concerns the ontological nature of psi phenomena. Psi is a complex problem that probably needs, in order to be solved in details, to first work out other complicated problems, like, for example, the relationship between the mind and the brain. Billions of dollars have been expensed in this domain without a clear

success and psi researchers, with few resources, will probably have difficulties to put a real input in this domain. Consequently, they won't be able to solve the psi mystery as long as clear progress in other fields of research won't be achieved. A third obstacle is a more sociological one: Science usually needs social implications in order to be integrated and developed in a social environment. As long as psi only proposes strange anomalies without clear implications, funding and progress will continue to be scarce.

One way to avoid in part these obstacles could be to focus research on psi applications and especially financial ones. Even if only small effect size can be achieved on a regular basis, they should be sufficient enough to develop reliable financial applications. In this regard, we will present several past attempts of financial applications using Associate Remote Viewing with selected participants (Bierman & Rabeyron, 2012). We will also show how new scientific and technological tools can help us to develop original psi applications (Franklin, Baumgart, & Schooner, 2014). We will expose several propositions in this direction: how to work on-line with large populations, the use of algorithm, coupling with relevant financial systems, and theory-based applications. This new approach could allow going from a "passive" experimental approach of psi to an "active" approach that could improve our control of psi thanks to a close articulation with applications.

INTENTION AND BRAIN-TO-BRAIN COMMUNICATION WITH NONINVASIVE TECHNIQUES

Anabela C. Ventura

Brain-to-brain communication has increasingly become a topic of interest in neuroscience. Previous studies have shown synchronization of neural activity between pairs of participants when intentionality is involved, even at a distance. This study, funded by Bial Foundation, investigates how distant focused intention (Reiki), either alone or enhanced by neurofeedback, influences executive-function performance (memory and problem solving). We also aim to determine whether or not there is any expansion of consciousness as a result of distant focused intention. Quantitative electroencephalography records, while a neurofeedback system attempts to enhance, the simultaneous brain activity of pairs engaged in Reiki. The intention sender is electrically isolated in a Faraday cage 2 km from receivers. Data analysis focuses on brain coherence between participants and sLORETA analysis focused on brain area activation.

HEART-BODY-MIND CONNECTION AT A DISTANCE AS A POTENTIAL NEW FORM OF COMMUNICATION

Flavio Burgarella & Patrizio E. Tressoldi

The feasibility of a potential new form of communication at a distance exploiting the evidence supporting the possibility of mental interactions with living systems (Roe, Sonnex, & Roxburgh, 2014) will be introduced. A special technique devised by the first author, utilizes a mind-heart intention directed towards distant human body parts e.g. neck and foot of a partner isolated from the transmitter to prevent any classical communication. The results of the first exploratory investigation on the correct identification of two body parts, the neck and the foot following a random sequence, will be presented.

CARDIO-ALERT AND MIND-SWITCH, TWO PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF PRESENTIMENT AND PK PHENOMENA

Patrizio Tressoldi & EvanLab Team

Cardio-Alert and Mind-Switch are two applications devised to exploit presentiment and micro-pk phenomena for practical purposes.

Cardio-Alert is a portable apparatus that uses the heart rate (HR) measured 10 seconds before the

presentation of two random events of different emotional content to help a participant choose a good option or avoid a bad one. After the definition of the HR baseline, a threshold is set above and below it. When the HR before the presentation of an event exceeds the threshold, an acoustic signal informs the participant that a potential dangerous or advantageous event is going to be presented, allowing the participant to change his or her choice. The results of a first confirmatory study will be presented.

In contrast, Mind-Switch is a practical application developed with the EvanLab Team, aimed at exploiting micro-pk effects. It consists of software accessible via the Internet, which monitors when the randomness of digits produced by a REG is violated to a predefined threshold by a mental interaction at a distance. When this threshold is achieved, the software sends a signal to an Arduino microcontroller that can trigger an electronic switch to activate or de-activate any connected apparatus.

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WORKSHOP: HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS INCLUDING DIGITALIZATION PROJECTS AT PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL ORGANIZATIONS IN EUROPE [PA]

Chair: Eberhard Bauer¹

Panelists: Renaud Evrard², Gerd Hövelmann³, Wim Kramer⁴, Michael Tremmel⁵, Sergii Vakal⁶

The importance of preserving historical collections including special libraries and archives for the social and cultural history of early psychical research and parapsychology—the “cultural memory” of the paranormal so to speak—is a widely acknowledged fact within the international parapsychological community. It is also a well-known fact how difficult it is to establish and to guarantee a stable and permanent organizational structure for preserving and making publicly available such “unorthodox” materials usually rejected by mainstream institutions. The purpose of the workshop is to give a short overview on different projects in several European countries dealing with the preservation of a variety of archival holdings and historical collections including its digitization endeavours.

LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS AT THE IGPP FREIBURG, GERMANY

Eberhard Bauer

The IGPP, founded in 1950, has a long tradition in building up and maintaining an international library on psychical research, parapsychology and border areas of psychology including archival and other collections dealing with the history of German psychical and anomalistic research. Its holdings, comprising more than 60,000 volumes, belong to the University Library of Freiburg. In collaboration with the University Library, the IGPP has started to digitalize selected German journals relevant for the history of early psychical research and parapsychology in order to make them available via Internet.

THE SCIENTIFIC IMAGINARY: FRENCH PERSPECTIVE ON A HERITAGE IN DANGER [PA]

Renaud Evrard

Concentrating on French material, this talk is dealing with public digitalizations (Gallica), private digitalizations (LexScien), and the Agence Martienne, a photolibrary specialized on the scientific imaginary and which is in contract with the Institut Métapsychique International (IMI), Paris.

TWO PRIVATE ESTATES, IMPORTANT TESTIMONIA OF
THE HISTORY OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN EUROPE

Gerd Hövelmann

The bequest of the Dutch skeptic and very nontypical CSICOP representative Piet Hein Hoebens (1948–1984) and the scientific estate of the not-quite-so-skeptical believer in spirits, the spiritualist Emil Prince zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg (1824-1878), could hardly be more different. And different these holdings are in many ways, beginning with the sad (Hoebens) or the unexpected and ludicrous (Wittgenstein) ways that both holdings got into my custody and care. However, there is one respect in which both “collections” are similar: Preserving these important materials for future generations is posing the very same problems in both cases; these are mainly due to lacking funds for professional archiving and digitization. Both collections currently are in satisfactory physical condition, but their future and their competent scientific appraisal are not sufficiently secured. This short paper will show relevant examples from both collections—such as Hoebens’s substantial correspondence with Eric J. Dingwall or Wittgenstein’s detailed protocols of spiritistic sessions with Florence Cook (“Katie King”) and other mediums—and emphasize their worthiness of protection and security.

PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF DUTCH PARAPSYCHOLOGY AS INTEGRAL
PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Wim Kramer

In 2007 a large-scale project was started to preserve the history of Dutch parapsychology as a 20th century scientific endeavor. This project included the preservation of the history of Dutch spiritualism and psychic healing. These topics are closely related to parapsychological research at Dutch universities in the 20th century. The aim of the project is to hand over these archives, including books and journals, to professional archival institutions and university libraries in the Netherlands. By doing so we make sure that the materials will be secured under Dutch archival law. The advantage is that the archival materials, books, and journals will be maintained professionally, kept forever, and will be publicly available to anyone.

Over the years we managed to obtain a substantial amount of archives. After indexing the materials we have already handed over a large—over 130 boxes—archive on the history of Dutch Spiritualism to the Utrecht Archive and archives dealing with psychic healing to the Gelders Archive in Arnhem. Thousands of books and journals have already been handed over to, amongst others, The National Royal Library of the Netherlands, the libraries of the University of Groningen and Erasmus University in Rotterdam, and the Library of the IGPP/University of Freiburg, in Germany. A collection of videotapes of TV programs of the 1980s was handed over to the National museum “Sound and Vision” in Hilversum in 2010.

Currently we are processing archives of the Dutch SPR and other parapsychological societies in Holland, the former Parapsychology Laboratory of Utrecht University and the very large collection of the Dutch psychic and healer Gerard Croiset. This archive also includes a substantial amount of international correspondence of missing person cases and chair tests. Next to this we have about a dozen smaller archival collections that need to be indexed. In March of this year we handed over a significant archival collection

on parapsychology in general including a substantial amount of books and journals and three artifacts to the ADNG, a scientific collection on the history of the social sciences supported by several Dutch universities and professional societies. In June 2014 we organized and hosted the international conference Preserving “Historical Collections of Parapsychology” (PHCP) in Utrecht, the Netherlands (see: www.hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl).

In this workshop we will discuss our progress and the challenges we encounter in digitizing and how to deal with photographic materials, film (16mm), audio tapes, videotapes, and the unique artifacts dealing with the paranormal we have obtained over the years. We also like to emphasize that preserving the history of parapsychology is not something to do “on the side.” To make it a success it needs constant serious attention of all parties involved and adequate funding.

DIGITIZING THE *JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY*

Michael Tremmel

This is a report on the current status of a project aimed at the digitization of *Journal of Parapsychology* issues. The project, undertaken on a voluntary basis, provides a cost-effective and high-quality model for future digitization projects. The PDF files produced are intended for distribution without page viewing restrictions and have the scans preserved to demonstrate to the user that it is safe to quote the digital journal version.

PSIHUB—A PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL DATABASE

Sergii Vakal

PSIHUB is a free search engine and bibliographic database of references and abstracts on parapsychological topics. It is the first parapsychological database with both English and Russian interfaces, thus allowing non-English speakers from post-Soviet countries to search abstracts of English periodicals and vice versa. The intended purpose of PSIHUB system is to strengthen and intensify information-sharing between Russian- and English-speaking psi researchers.

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PA INVITED ADDRESSES

FOR THE 2013 OUTSTANDING CAREER AWARD:
A VIEW FROM THE “MAGIC HILL”

Eberhard Bauer

The topic of my talk is dealing with my long association with the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) [Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Mental Health] which was founded in Freiburg i. Br. (Germany) in 1950 by Hans Bender (1907–1991), professor of psychology including border areas of psychology at Freiburg University and the Doyen of academic parapsychology in Germany after the WW II. In 1967 I started as a student collaborator and later, after I had finished my psychology study at Freiburg University, as Bender's scientific assistant at the IGPP which was located at that time at the address "Eichhalde 12" in Freiburg—therefore called "Eichhalde Institute." In a sense, this institution was Bender's most personal creation. For decades it represented in the Federal Republic of Germany an unrivalled center for parapsychological research, information, and advice, inspired by the tireless efforts of its founder. Quite a number of active parapsychological workers in Germany and abroad in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s got their first impressions of serious psi research by visiting Hans Bender's Freiburg Institute. An endless stream of visitors from all over the world was full of praise for the hospitality of its director and the beautiful location of the Institute overlooking the Rhine valley (I mean the river Rhein, of course). Bender used to speak of the place where he had erected his Institute as the "Magical Hill" ("*magischer Hügel*"). Among the visitors whom I've met in the years to come were mediums and magicians, astrologers and ufologists, dowzers and numerologists, witches and healers, gurus and charlatans, spiritualists and hostile sceptics, psychotics and serious scientists; classes of students, TV teams and hard-nosed journalists—they all came to Freiburg to see and to talk to the famous professor and to learn more about the "border areas" of science. Since its foundation, the IGPP has provided the public with an information and counseling service covering the whole spectrum of parapsychology, fringe sciences and anomalistic phenomena, summarized under the neutral term "exceptional experiences" (ExE). This includes information and material about the distribution and phenomenology of psychic experiences together with expert knowledge regarding the state of the art of interdisciplinary research related to border areas of psychology and anomalous phenomena. A special counseling program of the IGPP is designed to meet the individual needs of individuals who have to cope with "occult," supernatural or paranormal experiences causing them and others emotional distress ("mental hygiene"). In the early nineties, with the decisive help of new funding means coming from the private Munich "Holler Foundation," for which Hans Bender was responsible, the IGPP could expand and restructure its scope of activities considerably. In the years to follow the Institute became one of the biggest research and funding organizations in the field of parapsychology and anomalistics. It has maintained close collaborations and ties with major parapsychological research centers in the world. In 1996 the IGPP has left the old building at « Eichhalde 12 » and moved to new and modern premises in the center of Freiburg at « Wilhelmstrasse 3 A. » The actual mission of the IGPP can be described as systematic and interdisciplinary research concerning insufficiently understood phenomena and anomalies at the frontiers of current scientific knowledge. These include altered states of consciousness, exceptional human experiences, mind-matter relations, and their social, cultural and historical contexts from the perspectives of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. About twenty scientific staff members are currently active at the IGPP. The Institute runs also a special library comprising more than 60,000 volumes which form part of the main library of the University of Freiburg. The library subscribes approximately 260 journals, magazines and newsletters from all over the world. In addition, there is an archive focussing on all those materials (pictures, slides, films, tapes, manuscripts, letters, personal files) which may be of importance for cultural and historical aspects of both the reception of German parapsychology and of the Institute itself. In my talk I'll give an overview on the recent developments and projects done at the Institute.

Further details and references to my work can be found in my biographical chapter "On the Magic Hill," published in Rosemarie Pilkington, Ed., *Men and Women of Parapsychology, Personal Reflections. ESPRIT Volume 2* (pp. 29–59). San Antonio/New York: Anomalist Books, 2013.

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FOR THE 2014 OUTSTANDING CAREER AWARD:
ROBERT L. MORRIS AND THE KOESTLER CHAIR

Deborah Delanoy

This talk will highlight the approach Bob Morris took to advancing parapsychology during the years that he held the Koestler Chair of Parapsychology in the Psychology Department at the University of Edinburgh (1985–2004). As such, it's primarily aimed at the younger generation of parapsychologists, who may not have known Bob or be familiar with the Chair, except by reputation. Bob's manner of interacting, both within the Psychology Department and the university at large, as well as with other universities and learned societies, will be considered. His main research interests will be briefly touched upon. But of primary concern is how he presented parapsychology to others and the strategies he adopted to advance the well-being of parapsychology. The personal attributes he brought to his role of being the pre-eminent academic representative of parapsychology within Britain, if not within Europe, and arguably the world, will be considered. Also, the way in which he used his position to "normalize" parapsychology and integrate it with other research areas so that it would be viewed as a valid domain of scientific inquiry will be discussed. It is probably too soon to judge the ultimate success of this approach. But it is hoped that this summary could assist future generations to better make this assessment, as well as perhaps providing some helpful guidelines to other parapsychologists with similar aims.

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FOR THE 2013 CHARLES HONORTON INTEGRATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS AWARD:
INTRODUCING *PARAPSYCHOLOGY: A HANDBOOK FOR THE 21ST CENTURY*

Etzel Cardeña

In 1977, Benjamin Wolman published the *Handbook of Parapsychology*, a "state of the art" overview of the field. After almost 40 years, John Palmer, David Marcusson-Clavertz and I decided that it was important to come up with a new comprehensive and authoritative account of the current status of the field as well as provide the tools necessary for a new researcher or theoretician to initiate informed work on the area. Thus, *Parapsychology*, an edited volume with contributions by many of the most important workers in the field. In this presentation I will introduce the main sections of the volume: (a) basic concepts (including terminology, history of the field since 1977, and the case for and against parapsychology), (b) research methods and statistical approaches (including basic techniques and more recent developments such as Bayesian analysis), (c) psychology and psi (including psychological theories of psi; the impact of states, traits and beliefs on psi; and meditation and psi), (d) biology and psi (including an evolutionary perspective, and drugs and psi), (e) physics and psi (including physical theories and physical correlates of psi), (f) authoritative reviews of research on anomalous cognition, perturbation, and force, (g) research on survival (including mental mediumship, reincarnation, and related phenomena), (h) research on psi in everyday life and practical applications, and (i) a summing up of the import of parapsychology to science in general and my personal reflections on the field.

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FOR THE 2014 CHARLES HONORTON INTEGRATED CONTRIBUTIONS AWARD:
HEALING THE RIFT IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY: TURNING THE NONCONSCIOUS/CONSCIOUS
GAP INTO A COLLABORATIVE HANDSHAKE

Julia Mossbridge

There is a rift in parapsychology that is shared with all investigations examining the nature of mind and physical reality. We can only know what we observe with our conscious awareness, but we do most of the observing and processing of our observations with nonconscious processes. In fact, according to two commonly held tenets of neuroscience, nonconscious processes are responsible for everything we experience and think. And it appears, based on inference, that what we experience and think sometimes do not match the physical reality in which we exist. So even as we focus on our conscious impressions to try to carefully critique, analyze, and understand them in an attempt to understand the nature of mind and physical reality, we are forced by this nonconscious/conscious gap to include only the information offered into consciousness by our nonconscious processes. Moving forward in fields examining the nature of mind and physical reality requires a paradigm shift that allows us to identify and bring into awareness more of what is presently not conscious. Doing so requires us to reconceptualize the gap between nonconscious and conscious processes as a collaborative union of different portions of ourselves that can come to alternative agreements about what information is available to consciousness at what time. We must consider letting go of what has been called by philosopher John Searle (1996) “the terror of the subjective” as we begin to carefully blend first- and third-person observational methods with a broader acceptance of the overarching power of the relationship between nonconscious and conscious processes.

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FOR THE 2014 SCHMEIDLER OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD:
EXAMINING WHAT COGNITIVE MECHANISMS MAKE SPONTANEOUS
POST-DEATH PHENOMENA THERAPEUTIC FOR THE BEREAVED

Callum E. Cooper, Chris A. Roe, & Graham Mitchell

Bereavement can be described as a universally experienced set of negative emotional stages experienced following the loss of an object we hold dear (Carr, 1975). This typically involves the loss of people through physical separation or biological death, but can occur in a variety of circumstances, including separation from childhood toys or the loss of a limb through accident and amputation (Doka, 1989). To be able to experience such a personal loss we must first have formed an attachment to *something*, or typically *someone*. A psychological attachment is “the strong, affectionate tie we have with special people in our lives that leads us to feel pleasure when we interact with them and to be comforted by their nearness during times of stress” (Berk, 2006, p. 419).

One of the most common anomalous experiences reported by the bereaved is “sensing the presence of the dead.” Many other experiences have been reported including: sounds, smells, touch, apparitions, poltergeist activity, dreams, and symbolic events (Cooper, Roe, & Mitchell, 2015). Rees (1971) highlighted the commonality of such phenomena in the *British Medical Journal*, whereupon health care professionals, bereavement counsellors, and other relevant practitioners, became more aware and sympathy toward the bereaved reporting such experiences. People began to listen, rather than dismiss. And yet, some 80 years before the publication of Rees (1971), psychical research had already given significant attention to such experiences through investigating “apparitions occurring soon after death” (Gurney & Myers, 1889).

However, following the Rees (1971) study, which was the product of a medical doctoral thesis, a respectable number of studies have followed since then regarding the nature and impact of post-death encounters on the bereaved, predominantly in the form of doctoral theses (to cite a few: Burton, 1980; Conant, 1992; Drewry, 2002; Knight, 2011; Parker, 2004). Most of the previously conducted studies have

focused on qualitative designs to investigate the nature of such experiences, their influence, and their interpretation by the bereaved. Such studies have found consistent themes of: relief, joy, forgiveness, love, healing and hope—the latter of which has been casually expressed in various ways by both participant and researcher, in their experiences and conclusions.

This current study—conducted as part of a doctoral thesis—has set out to investigate what possible role hope plays within post-death encounters through the examination of bereavement and recovery. Previous studies have failed to measure and examine the presence and purpose of hope from their findings. Added to that, little if any discussion has previously been provided on how important it is to embrace hope, and that it is a valuable human trait and driving force to our daily lives and motivation (Snyder, 1994, 1996; Stotland, 1969).

A sample of individuals ($N = 100$) who were comfortable to recall a significant bereavement in their life were recruited and placed into one of two categories. An experimental group consisting of participants who had suffered a significant bereavement in their life which followed with at least one spontaneous anomalous experience ($n = 50$), and a control group consisting of participants who had suffered a significant bereavement in their life but have *never* had any form of spontaneous encounter associated with the deceased ($n = 50$). All participants were provided with a questionnaire battery containing scales on afterlife belief, paranormal belief, religious belief, death anxiety, and a scale measuring personal levels of hope before and after the event of a significant personal loss (followed by an anomalous experience or not). Findings suggest that to have a spontaneous post-death encounter helps to maintain levels of hope and ease loss through a continued bond with the dead. While those who do report such encounters during bereavement, report a significant drop in their levels of hope—which could lead to prolonged or intensified negative side-effects of grief (namely depression). This presentation will discuss such initial findings and conclusions further, and how the research plans to progress.

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:
PSI IS NOT A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANOMALY

James C. Carpenter

Is psi real? If it is, where does it fit into our mental life? Is it a rare, rogue phenomenon? What is it for? How does it work?

Dr. Carpenter will present the essential elements of a theory that he has developed, called First Sight, that he intends to go a long way toward answering these questions. He will spell out a point of view in which psi is real, and is very common, very useful, and potentially as predictable as the other elements of unconscious mental processing that are being actively studied by contemporary cognitive science. The constructs of unconscious intention, and the direction and the stability of direction of unconscious intention, are especially central to this theory. He will place special emphasis on programmatic research implicit in First Sight: the kinds of research questions that it has spawned and will encourage in the future, and the sorts of studies that will be most pertinent to it.

Based upon the greater clarity that this theory can be shown to produce in extant research, there is reason to be optimistic that it will be fruitful in developing a meaningful and predictive understanding of psi.

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J. B. RHINE BANQUET ADDRESS:
THE FACES OF GOD: TABOO AND METAPHOR IN VENTURING BEYOND PHYSICALISM

Les Lancaster

Parapsychology and transpersonal psychology meet in their respective interests in specifying psychological processes involved in experiences that many regard as being anomalous. Whilst parapsychologists lay emphasis on behavioural demonstrations of such anomalous phenomena, transpersonal psychologists focus on a subset of these phenomena associated with the journey towards enriched states of being, as originally enunciated through mystical texts and other religious writings. The two disciplines meet in their concern to understand the medium through which anomalous events may arise, and the ways in which this medium impacts on known psychological processes. In this presentation I explore the ways in which the term “transcendent” might be applied to this medium. Is it transcendent in the scientifically plausible sense of entailing dimensions beyond time and space, or is it more radically transcendent in the theistic terms that mystical traditions generally teach? How might we differentiate between the epistemologies that underlie these positions? And, crucially, what impact do these views have for the individual engaged in some kind of transpersonal journey of growth? An instructive parallel may be drawn from the 13th-century Kabbalah which adopted grandiose schemes of the “faces of God” in order to conceptualise realms beyond the immediate world of our senses. Despite lengthy descriptions of intricate features of these faces there was little conflict with the taboo on depictions of God since it was understood that insight can be conveyed only through metaphor. In our day when the “S-word”—once taboo in psychology—is practically centre-stage, might we productively revisit formulations of the “G-word” in order to advance our insight into the metaphorical roots of knowing?

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