

The Bulletin of the  
Parapsychological  
Association

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# Mindfield

Volume 10

Issue 1

CELEBRATING

DIVERSE

METHODS

Statistics men  
never having to  
say you're certain

The Bulletin of the  
Parapsychological  
Association

101.2018

# Mindfield

Volume 10  
Issue 1



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# From the *Mindfield* Team

The Bulletin of the  
Parapsychological  
Association  
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We are so pleased to be the new international triumvirate producing *Mindfield*: co-Editors Annalisa Ventola (USA) and Renaud Evrard (France) with PA Art Director Nikolaos Koumartzis (Greece). *Mindfield* began in Fall 2009 under Professor Etzel Cardeña's editorship and is now up to 25 issues. We are grateful to Prof. Cardeña for his previous work on *Mindfield* and congratulate him on his new position of editor of the *Journal of Parapsychology*. We will try to build on his ideas and on the ingredients that have made *Mindfield* a success.

*Mindfield* is a great place to build community among our members. We hope to create a dialogue between researchers, share news of the field, and occasionally get nostalgic. We are pleased that this issue hosts a variety of contributions from scholars and

scientists around the world who showcase the diversity of our field. In this issue we are introducing a *News Watch* column and a *Research Watch* column, curated by Annalisa Ventola with the assistance of our staff writers Jess Ferguson and Anastasia Wasko. Previous columns have also made a comeback, such as the presidential column, as well as the bibliographical column edited by late Gerd Hövelmann, which reveals how parapsychological themes have inspired and subverted mainstream English-language journals. We are pleased to gather a new team of volunteers to develop this legacy, whom you will encounter in next pages.

At a café on an Athens terrace last summer, our international triumvirate decided to maintain *Mindfield*'s typical format of loosely-themed issues with regular columns. The first theme that came to mind, was "methodological pluralism," inspired by the diversity of the program for the PA's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in Columbus, Ohio. We discussed how we are linked by a scientific attitude more than by academic disciplines or by a particular worldview. Even if experimental approaches enjoy a

privileged status, parapsychology cannot be reduced to it.

What is left of empirical data without historical contextualization, without philosophical analyses, without hints of sociology of sciences, or without taking into account the ethical and clinical effects on participants? Isn't parapsychology the best example of a transdisciplinary science – not the kind of interdisciplinary approach that often label itself as such, yet does not question its original disciplines – but a real research field that arises from the encounters and comparisons between perspectives? Psi forces us to transcend the methodological and disciplinary monisms, to build a science with multiple complementary faces. That's what the PA looks like, and it's a source of pride.

We invite PA members to submit short papers, news, and thematic ideas to [mindfield@parapsych.org](mailto:mindfield@parapsych.org). *Mindfield* will also receive books at the PA address printed on the back cover. The themes of our next two issues will look at the language of parapsychology and theories of psi. Please contact us if you would like to participate in these thematic conversations.



# Feyerabend, Pluralism, and Parapsychology

Pluralism is all the rage, these days, in the philosophy of science.

Sixty years after Thomas Kuhn's claim, in *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, that periods of science are dominated by a single "paradigm," a more pluralistic climate prevails. Under the influence of careful studies in the history and sociology of science, it's now recognised that science is irreducibly plural in its concepts, practices, methods, metaphysical commitments, and social structures. Indeed, talk of "science" in the singular may be suspect, given the sheer heterogeneity of the activities and projects gathered under that elastic label (see Kellert, Longino, and Waters 2006).

Such pluralism, however, always had its champions. Among the most obvious, and the most colourful, was the self-styled

"epistemological anarchist," Paul Feyerabend, one dubbed. Close to Kuhn and Karl Popper during the 1950s and 60s, he became best known for his 1975 book, *Against Method*. Preferring the term "anarchism" for its rhetorical force, Feyerabend outlined a doctrine of methodological and theoretical pluralism. Scientific enquiry is plural all the way down, consisting of a *melange* of formal methods, *ad hoc* adjustments, flexible guidelines, and accidents, serendipities, and creative and imaginative exercises. What Feyerabend is against is methodological monism, which caricatures scientific practice, and, in the process, distorts and understates the achievements of its practitioners. When he says, dramatically, "anything goes," he's caricaturing the attitudes of those in the grip of that narrow vision of science (see Shaw 2017).

Feyerabend presented his



| by IAN JAMES KIDD,  
University of Nottingham

pluralistic anarchism as both a descriptive fact about scientific practice and as a normative thesis. What one sees, in the laboratory or at the workbench, is not the mindless operation of a Popperian falsification machine—feeding in data, churning out hypotheses. If one looks carefully, one finds that scientists are imaginative and

creative, adapting existing rules, developing new experimental protocols, guided but not bound by existing methods. The elastic term “Science” covers an array of practices, projects, and methods, whose complexity and diversity is apt to be disguised by reductive models, such as those of Kuhn and Popper.

Feyerabend argued that such pluralism is obvious to anyone acquainted with the history and practice of science, crediting many of his insights to scientists themselves. There was, however, a charged critique of mid-twentieth-century Anglophone philosophy of science that alienated many in the discipline. If pluralism is obvious to those informed about science, the implication was obviously that philosophers of science were not among them—lost in their abstract models, as entranced by logic as they were ignorant of history. Moreover, pluralist stances on science threatened to challenge prevailing conceptions of science’s status and authority. If the special cognitive authority of science lies in its having a special method—a singular, formalised, context-invariant, historically-unchanging scientific method—then any denial of that method was a challenge to the authority of science. Critics therefore took Feyerabend to be an enemy of science, perversely deploying his philosophical learning to attack our premiere cog-

nitive authority. Correcting that perception has been a main task for modern scholars of his work (see, e.g., Kidd 2015 and Oberheim 2006).

Such worries about Feyerabend’s motives were amplified by his dramatic, polemical style. The title, *Against Method*, is stark and punchy; the opening pages cite Lenin, Marx, and the radical playwright Bertolt Brecht; and the writing and scholarly style is energetic, informal, and idiosyncratic. Coupled to the potent challenges to received wisdom about science, the effect was to vex many philosophers of science, reflected in their reviews of the book. Unfortunately, Feyerabend responded in kind, firing back with exaggerated rhetoric and a series of even more provocative claims, gathered in a sequel, *Science in a Free Society*. In this book, we hear a call for the separation of science from the state, and a treated to an extreme form of cultural and epistemic relativism. More strikingly—and the final straw for many philosophers of science—Feyerabend engaged in defences of astrology and (of special interest in the present context) parapsychology. As Marcello Truzzi remarked, it was this book that earned Feyerabend his reputation as the “Puck of modern philosophy of science,” while Martin Gardner dismissed it as being “of no interest” (in Richards 2017: 193, 195). (Interestingly, Truzzi consistently chides Gardner for

*More strikingly—and the final straw for many philosophers of science—Feyerabend engaged in defences of astrology and (of special interest in the present context) parapsychology.*

failing to appreciate the salient, insightful points in Feyerabend’s writings and underscoring his “heavyweight” status; see, e.g., Richards 2017: 197, 281.)

Before going into the details of these defences, it’s worth noting the three standard ways they’ve been interpreted by philosophers of science. First, some read them as signs that Feyerabend was committed to the truth or efficacy of astrology or parapsychology. But the textual evidence doesn’t support this; although he might have declared his commitment to, say, telepathy in public talks—under the influence of adrenaline—there’s no written statement to support claims of commitment. Second, some dismiss the defences as mere provocation, as ways of raising the ire of staid philosophers of science. Certainly, there’s an element of that, but such dismissals ignore the

fact that people often seek to provoke to some purpose—to raise awareness of an issue, to promote discussion of an issue, or whatever. The principle of charity, if nothing else, invites us to ask what reasons Feyerabend might have for discussing astrology and parapsychology. That brings us to the third response.

Since Feyerabend's guiding aim was to assert and defend a pluralistic vision of science, some commentators read the defences as part of that project. Often, the argument here is inspired by John Stuart Mill's defence of the "freedom of thought and discussion," in chapter two of *On Liberty*, an essay beloved by Feyerabend (see Lloyd 1997). For Mill, one of the main dangers we face, as societies, is the inevitable tendency of beliefs to degenerate into dead dogmas. Since active critical reflection is difficult, we must

*One way to do this is to defend what one commentator calls "unpopular minority views," while simultaneously challenging widely-accepted views and convictions.*

constantly work hard to resist lapsing into dogmatism, complacency, and easy groupthink. One way to do this is to defend what one commentator calls "unpopular minority views," while simultaneously challenging widely-accepted views and convictions. By provoking people into actually arguing against views that most are content to merely dismiss, one can force others to up their game.

Read in this way, Feyerabend's defences of "unpopular minority positions"—like parapsychology—are best understood as efforts to deliberately play certain roles essential to the intellectual health of a community. Provocation, dramatism, and the questioning of received wisdom can keep us, epistemically, on our toes, even if the rewards for doing so are few and the costs many. But though this reading seems right to me, as far as it goes, it leaves out another important dimension of the defences. This concerns the demarcation problem. An important implication of methodological pluralism is that it becomes much more difficult to specify criteria for distinguishing science from pseudoscience, becomes much more difficult. One cannot argue that science conforms to the scientific method, because no such thing exists, except in the pages of science textbooks and philosophy of science articles. Instead, there are a set of methods—formal and informal, defined and implicit—

which muddy the borders between different disciplines and projects of enquiry. Feyerabend often emphasised the ways that false conceptions of science were used illegitimately to exclude and derogate other projects, disciplines, traditions.

An emphasis on the pluralistic character of science and the fuzziness of its internal and external boundaries is, of course, entirely compatible with the critical task of appraising theories, methods, and projects of enquiry. That task just becomes much harder and less algorithmic. The core thesis of *Against Method* was, explained Feyerabend (1993:1), that "the events, procedures, and results that constitute the sciences have no common structure." But that does not mean that they are structureless, random, or chaotic. Quite the contrary—careful studies in the history and sociology of science indicates that the sciences have local, complex, changing structures, a sensible point too-often lost amid Feyerabend's dramatic talk of anarchism and "the monster, Science." What really comes out of *Against Method* is a call for a particularist, pluralist analysis of the sciences, one that eschews overly generalised claims that can be sustained only by neglecting the practical and epistemic realities of scientific activity.

Gathering these points together, we can look closer at Feyera-



bend's remarks on parapsychology, the most sustained of which appear in *Science in a Free Society*. Most of what he says seems to be taken from Lyall Watson's book, *Supernature*—as Truzzi says, "better studies could have been cited" (in Richards 2017: 197)—and conforms to Feyerabend's typical dialectical style (see Feyerabend 1978:91). You start with a derogated subject or topic, such as parapsychology or astrology, noting the scorn or derision it often receives, and declare your intention to try to encourage a more intellectually robust engagement with it. Then you introduce empirical details of the relevant phenomena, coupling this to a sympathetic presentation of existing methods and investigations.

The purpose of all of this is to show, first, that the critics tend not to know anything at all about the object of their derision; then, second, that there is more to understand and argue against; then the critics tend to suspect; and, finally, that the methods, data, or phenomena actually find precedent elsewhere in the history of science. The upshot of this dialectical style is usually that the critics are shown to be ignorant and intellectually lazy, relying on assertions rather than arguments, and thereby failing to live up to the high intellectual standards they reserve for themselves (see Kidd 2016).

I suspect Feyerabend's point is that those who sneer at parapsychology tend not to be quite ignorant of it—which doesn't, of course, require him to regard it as credible or compelling. Judging about the status of parapsychology will be made relative to some conception of science, and Feyerabend's question is whether that conception is cogent—an intellectual strategy that doesn't require any prior commitment, *pro* or *contra*, to the status of parapsychology. Reading *Science in a Free Society*'s brief discussion of parapsychology, it seems clear this is what is happening, a judgment confirmed by his other brief remarks on parapsychology. In these cases, he's really interrogating our operative conceptions of science, rather than defending putative pseudosciences (see Feyerabend 1984).

We see the same thing in a seminar Feyerabend organised at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule in Zurich, on 24 Mays 1984, on parapsychology. The panellists were Hans Bender, Eberhard Bauer, Piet Hein Hoebens, and Feyerabend, whose talk was telling titled, "What does it mean to be scientific?" The guiding question was "Which objections might a proponent of strict scientific rigour raise against parapsychology, and how does parapsychology respond?" Here, we clearly see Feyerabend's guiding focus on the nature of science, rather than

a specific interest in the status of parapsychology. Hoeben—a Dutch journalist and sceptic—appealed to the plurality of science, protesting the vagueness of the concept of "strict scientific rigour," and arguing that attempts to "differentiate between research programmes on that criterion [are] running the risk of being overly dogmatic" (2017:56).

I think that what's really going, clearly, on isn't a defence of parapsychology or astrology, but a criticism of scientists who fall short of their own high intellectual standards by offering ignorant dismissals not informed criticisms. Feyerabend's point is, in a sense, "*Do better—live up to your own high intellectual standards.*" Declaring that it's *obvious* that parapsychological phenomena are not genuine, or that astrology is 'bunk', is far too quick. Moreover, such intellectual behaviour plays into the

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hands of the enemies of science—to the quacks, charlatans, and others who resist or revile the authority of science.

For Feyerabend, the main lesson to take from methodological pluralism is that science is messy. Careful attention to its history, practice, and science shows that it's too complex to admit of general descriptions, except ones so bland or trite as to be useless. An authentically reflective stance shows its many methods, its many theories, its many varied ways of organising and conducting its activities. Within this pluralist vision, it becomes much harder for us to make neat, clean, rapid judgments; any sharp demarcation between science and pseudoscience has to be abandoned, or at least hugely complicated; the relationships between modern sciences and historical protosciences becomes messier—this is

the real meaning of an 'anarchistic' vision of science. But there's no denial, on Feyerabend's part, of the depth, complexity, and value of science—quite the contrary.

A pluralistic conception of the sciences tells a truer picture of the historical, intellectual, and imaginative richness of the scientific enterprise. If an important part of understanding that richness is exploring the status and relations of parapsychology and other eccentric projects and traditions, then so much the better, says Feyerabend. In the end, their status mattered less to him than the primary goal of promoting informed and critically alert engagement with the scientific enterprise. Understanding its pluralism is an important aspect of that, one quite compatible with critical interest in parapsychology, so long as interest is not confused with commitment.

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# NEWS WATCH

## Upcoming PA Convention

The Parapsychological Association will be holding its 61st annual convention on August 2–5, 2018 at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) in Petaluma, California ([http://www.parapsych.org/section/58/2018\\_convention.aspx](http://www.parapsych.org/section/58/2018_convention.aspx)). Leading scientists and other academics from around the world will gather to present the latest parapsychological research into psi and related phenomena, such as extra-sensory perception, psychokinesis, psychic healing, altered states of consciousness, mediumship, and possible survival of bodily death. Organized by Dean Radin and Everton Maraldi, the event will be open to the public and academics alike.

Prior to the PA convention the IONS Research Department will host a two-day intensive workshop (<https://noeticprograms.org/2018/01/01/parapsychology-workshop/>) on the state-of-the-art in psi research. The preconference workshop will

be led by IONS scientists and other leaders in the field. Morning sessions will consist of dynamic lectures, discussion, and Q&A. In the afternoons, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in laboratory psi experiments. Evening sessions may include further discussion, Q&A, and viewing of relevant documentary films.

## Mindfield Reach Expands

At the Athens PA convention, the 2016–2017 Board decided to release this formerly members-only publication for general purchase. Up until this year, only members of the PA could download *Mindfield* issues, but now anyone can purchase and download at digital issue for \$10 or purchase a hard copy for \$16 (plus shipping), and all issues 5 years or older are now available for free download at <http://www.magcloud.com/browse/magazine/1335812>.

## PARE News

The grants competition for the 2017 Parapsychological Association Research Endowment (PARE) has come to a close, and three grant proposals have been awarded. The PA will be providing funds to support research into associative remote viewing methods and results analysis, the psychology of attachment and the exceptional experiences of twins, and perceptual and psychophenomenological traits associated with varieties of healing practices. Each research initiative will explore areas that have far-reaching implications for furthering the science of parapsychology and understanding the nature of consciousness.

**Igor Grgić, Debra Lynne Katz, and Patrizio Tressoldi** study associative remote viewing (ARV), a specific application of remote viewing during which predictions about events or circumstances can be made. ARV is a method to access information that will only be known in the future, and it is commonly connected with pre-



dicting outcomes of financial and sporting events. Grgić and his team will be reviewing data from previously completed ARV trials. The researchers seek to understand what worked when predictions resulted in hits and what went wrong when predictions resulted in misses. Then, six independent judges and two teams of two working under blind conditions will repeat judging, scoring, and prediction methods of the previous trials with a focus on identifying and evaluating differences in judging styles and predictive decision-making, leading to a better understanding of what constitutes a “Hit” or “Miss” in ARV.

**Göran Brusewitz** (Doctoral Candidate, Greenwich University) will conduct a study that explores the connections between attachment among twins. Brusewitz plans to collect information through web surveys following email invitations sent to approximately 5400 UK twins. He will then analyze the responses with a focus on the subscales of anxiety and avoidance between identical and non-identical twins and between male and female twins. Additionally, the development of attachment in relation to aging will be reviewed. A question on exceptional experiences (telepathy-like experiences, remote sensing, etc.) will be meant to evoke responses that will make it possible to compare attachment with exceptional experiences, thereby linking parapsychology to psychology.

**Alejandro Parra** (Instituto de Psicología Paranormal of Buenos Aires) and **Jorge Villanueva** are conducting workshops to further understanding of the perceptual and psychophenomenological traits associated with varieties of healing practices. Parra and Villanueva seek to understand the experiences of healing practitioners who claim to have various kinds of healing practices with their clients. Another objective will be to explore correlations between these healing experiences and personality variables, such as interoceptive awareness, personality traits (empathy, extraversion, positive schizotypy) and perceptual variables (visual vividness, locus of control, psychological absorption, and sensations seeking). Parra and Villanueva predict that healing practitioners will show a higher level of corporal awareness, empathy, extroversion, and other perceptual traits.

Donations to support the mission of the PA, including the funding of research initiatives, can be made by contacting Executive Director Annalisa Ventola at [annalisa@parapsych.org](mailto:annalisa@parapsych.org), or by visiting our Support Page.

## SSE and IRVA Convention

The 37th annual SSE Conference will take place June 6–10, 2018, at the South Point Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada (<https://www.scientific-exploration.org/2018-conference>).

It will be a joint conference with the International Remote Viewing Association (IRVA). Prior the conference will also be an opportunity to join a three-day workshop held by the Applied Precognition Project (<http://www.appliedprecog.com/app2018conference>).

## Ingo Swann Research Fellowship

The University of West Georgia Ingram Library is inviting applications for the Ingo Swann Research Fellowship for 2018. It was established in honor of artist, author, practitioner and teacher of remote viewing, Ingo Swann, to advance scholarship in the field of parapsychology and to encourage use of the parapsychology collections in the University of West Georgia, Ingram Library’s Special Collections in unique and creative ways.

Those who are engaged in graduate-level, postdoctoral, or independent research are invited to apply. Up to \$3,000 of support will be awarded to help cover travel, living, and research expenses. Details at <https://www.westga.edu/library/special-collections/swannfellowship.php>

*Send your  
news items to  
[mindfield@parapsych.org](mailto:mindfield@parapsych.org)  
for potential inclusion  
in issue 10.2.*

# RESEARCH WATCH

## Special Issue of *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*

The March 2017 issue of the emerging APA journal *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*, edited by Steven Jay Lynn (one of the editors of the famous *Varieties of Anomalous Experiences*) had a special issue on “Anomalous, exceptional, and nonordinary experiences.”

It begins with an introduction of material in *Varieties* provided by its three editors (Cardena, Lynn, Krippner), then original articles about mystical-type experiences induced by hypnosis (Lynn & Evans), antecedents of mystical experiences in intensive meditation (Russ & Elliott), the phenomenology of extreme sports (Brymer & Schweitzer), trauma-related altered states of consciousness (Frewen, Brown, & Lanius), and a testable neurological model of near-death

experiences (Lake). One of the most original pieces is a study of how consensual BDSM practices facilitate role-specific altered states of consciousness (Ambler et al.). There is also a multimethod study of the «noetic quality» (Yaden et al.) and of the use of Rasch scaling in consciousness research (Lange). All articles are of the highest scientific and scholarly quality. The issue is available for order at <http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/special/6160401.aspx>,

## Analyzing Linguistic Characteristics in Requests for Paranormal Investigations

The Windbridge Research Center, a 501(c)(3) formed in July 2017, is dedicated to performing scientific research and creating educational materials focused on dying, death, and “what comes next.” PA Associate Member Mark Boccuzzi serves

as the Executive Director of the new Center which will continue the mediumship research conducted at Windbridge Institute LLC and, among other functions, publish a new, free, online-only, open access journal titled *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness (TJICS)*.

One of the first articles in *TJICS*, submitted by Boccuzzi, is titled “Analyzing Linguistic Characteristics in Requests for Paranormal Investigations.” Boccuzzi tracks the linguistic changes over time in how experiencers chose to report paranormal encounters. Boccuzzi used text analysis techniques on the Windbridge Research Center’s catalogue of case requests, which was split into two groups: requests made between 1999–2006 and 2007–2014. Using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count software (LIWC), Boccuzzi calculated different psychologically meaningful categories from the data set.

The language patterns show lots of interesting features. For

example, reports of the paranormal between 2007–2014 are more associated with negative experience, evidenced by an increase in words displaying a range of negative emotions including anxiety and sadness. The text analysis demonstrates experiencers are thinking in a less critical manner about their experience; this is evidenced in the decline of cognitive processes, insight, and inclusiveness in their written word. Boccuzzi suggests the following reasons for the change: the surge of paranormal-themed reality entertainment and reliance on electronic media, often hand-held, which encourages a different type of reporting of the paranormal.

Boccuzzi, M. (2017). Analysing linguistic characteristics in requests for paranormal investigations. *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness Studies*, 1, 15–20.

## On the correspondence between dream content and target material under laboratory conditions: A meta-analysis of dream-ESP studies, 1966–2016

Lance Storm, Simon J. Sherwood, Chris A. Roe, Patrizio E. Tressoldi, Adam J. Rock, and Lorenzo Di Risio

performed a meta-analysis on two sets of dream-ESP studies that took place between 1966–2016. The results were published in the October 2017 edition of *International Journal of Dream Research*. This meta-analysis used a comprehensive database of dream-ESP studies conducted over the period 1966 to 2016, comparing the earlier studies at the Maimonides Medical Center with similarly controlled independent studies.

One of the aims of this meta-analysis was to review data for an effect-size difference between REM and non-REM dream ESP studies and see if a REM-psi relationship could be substantiated experimentally. Storm et al did not find a significant difference between mean values of each dataset. However, they found that dream content can be used to identify target materials correctly and more often than would be expected by chance, and that dream ESP is a demonstrable effect and is not influenced by experimenter, or laboratory, or historical context.

Dream ESP appears to be independent of psi modality (telepathy, clairvoyance or precognition), REM monitoring, target type (dynamic or static), and agent and perceiver arrangements, and perhaps independent of the number of choices in a target set. The researchers conclude that the

dream-ESP paradigm in parapsychology is worthy of continued investigation, but recommend design improvements.

Storm, L., Sherwood, S., Roe, C. A., Tressoldi, P.E., Rock, A.J., & Di Risio, L. (2017). On the correspondence between dream content and target material under laboratory conditions: A meta-analysis of dream-ESP studies, 1966–2016. *International Journal of Dream Research*, 10, 120 – 140.

## Physiological investigation on electroencephalography (EEG) coherency during yoga meditation and QiGong exercise

Tadashi Kato and Kimiko Kawano oversaw an investigation into the physiological effects on the brain during yoga meditation and QiGong. The outcome of this research appeared in the September 2017 edition of *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* (ISLIS). Kato and Kawano recorded EEG activity from three groups: individuals who practiced transcendental meditation (yoga meditation), individuals who practiced QiGong, and healthy university students who did not have experience in either discipline (the control group), but listened to a relaxing piece of music. The



participants in the transcendental meditation group had over three years of practice, and the participants in the QiGong group had over 10 years of QiGong teaching experience.

Previous research has established that higher EEG coherences (the degree of similarity of the EEG recorded at two sensors) indicate higher structural and/or functional connectivity of neuronal activities within the cerebral cortex. EEGs were measured in three stages: pre-treatment rest, treatment, and post-treatment rest. Kato and Kawano observed that increased inner-brain synchronicity as measured by increased EEG coherence was achieved during transcendental meditation. Coherences increased only after treatment in the QiGong group, implying a differential physiological mechanism. There was no significant difference measured in the control group.

The clinical application of this data implies the potential usefulness of EEG coherence feedback as an effective method for the coaching of relaxation with a proper level of alertness in athletes and others who can benefit from such a state of mind.

Tadashi, Kato & Kawano, Kimiko. (2017). Physiological Investigation on EEG Coherency during Yoga Meditation and QiGong Exercise. *Journal of Inter-*

*national Society of Life Information Science (ISLIS)*, 35(2), 99-108.

## Laboratory research on a presumably PK- Gifted subject

In the June 2017 issue of the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, Juan Gimeno and Darío Burgo report their article “Laboratory research on a presumably PK-gifted subject.” In a PK laboratory organized between June 2014 and December 2015, 23 meetings were held with a PK subject to psychokinetically produce table movements. The PK subject was selected from a sitting group called The Red Lights; the group gradually eliminated participants from table tipping experiments until they identified the dominant PK agent. The working group was managed by Alejandro Parra with the investigators Juan Gimeno and Darío Burgo.

Funding was provided by a 2014 PA Gilbert Roller grant whose purpose is to fund research projects in the field of macro-PK. The Gilbert Roller grant helped to furnish the laboratory set up at the Instituto de Psicología Paranormal de Buenos Aires (The Institute for Paranormal Psychology of Buenos Aires). With the technology purchased, including but not limited to four infrared illumination security video cam-

eras, two independent cameras, a high-definition microphone, scales, and secure large storage for the data, a variety of phenomena was recorded and documented including the movement of a table at will with contact.

The article contains many photographs and videos of apparent macro-PK. Some videos are available on YouTube; one video shows the PK subject raising the table leg at will. See: <https://youtu.be/rdTbWRkypqo>. Contactless movement of the table or other objects could not be achieved. During some sessions, EEG data produced anomalies and the normal curve of a random number generator also deviated significantly. Steven Braude travelled to attend three of the sessions in Buenos Aires and offers his perspective in the appendix. Plans for future research for the group are underway, including deeper inquiry into several aspects of the unexplained movements.

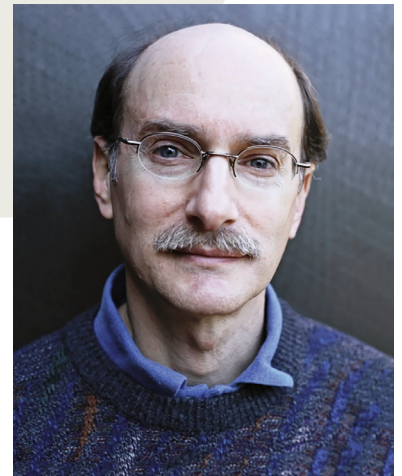
Gimeno, J. and Burgo, D. (2017). Laboratory research on a presumably PK-gifted subject. *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 31(2), 159-186.

# Toward a New PA for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**T**he first PA convention I attended was in 1978 in St. Louis, Missouri. I was a graduate student at the time, and I made it part of my homework before the convention to read everything I could find in the university library about parapsychology. After attending the convention, I wondered why this fascinating discipline, with nearly a century of empirical data under its belt, was completely missing from the academic curriculum. I also wondered why some professors, usually those who held rigidly orthodox opinions, invariably turned red and hovered on the verge of apoplectic shock whenever I brought up the subject. I soon learned that my more creative

professors were keenly interested in parapsychology, but they insisted on discussing it only in hushed tones and behind closed doors.

As a grad student, I naively thought that science was about rigorously exploring the unknown and being open to testing all sorts of new ideas. The promise of unfettered exploration was what attracted me to science in the first place, but clearly that was not how it actually worked. If I had been studying the sociology and philosophy of science, perhaps I wouldn't have been so puzzled at the strange reactions I encountered whenever I mentioned parapsychology.



| by *DEAN RADIN, Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS)*

Today, having been involved in this field for some 40 years, and serving now in my fifth term as president of the PA, I have a better understanding. In a nutshell, the word *parapsychology* is toxic. That word enjoys a certain im-

munity in a few academic refuges found in the United Kingdom and South America, but if spoken in academic settings in most other countries it is advisable to wear armored underpants and carry an ample supply of antibiotics and bandages.

How can we correct this problem?

Let's begin by recalling that the last issue of *Mindfield* (issue 9.3) reprinted Charles Honorton's 1975 Presidential Address to the PA. Honorton asked if the scientific orthodoxy was competent to confront claims of the paranormal. His answer was no, despite solid evidence for a host of psi effects. As a result, he urged that

we should not continue to play the game that eventually, after all, science is objective and our

findings will eventually become accepted on their merit. I do not believe this. We have been struggling against irrational prejudice for a long time. Patience goes only so far and I think that if the situation is going to change, we are going to have to change it.

Honorton's opinion echoed that of Cambridge scholar Henry Sidgwick, who gave the very first Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research in 1882. At that meeting, Sidgwick said the following:

It is a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these [psi] phenomena should still be going on, that so many competent witnesses should have declared their belief in them, that so many others should be profoundly interested in having the question determined, and yet that the educated world, as a body, should still be simply in the attitude of incredulity. Scientific incredulity has been so long in growing, and has so many and so strong roots, that we shall only kill it, if we are able to kill it at all ..., by burying it alive under a heap of facts....

Well, here we are 43 years after Honorton and 135 years after Sidgwick, and parapsychology is not any closer to being mainstreamed. The existential ques-

tion about psi is stronger than ever, yet top-tier journals still tend to reject psi-positive articles but gladly accept psi-negative polemics. Here is a recent example of this prejudice: A group of us from the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) submitted a paper to a high impact journal in which we merely *suggested* that psi might be interesting to study because advanced meditators frequently report experiences that sound a lot like telepathy and clairvoyance. The paper was instantly rejected because the editor asserted that genuine psi was literally impossible, equivalent in his view to the claim that pigs can fly. In another case, an article that we had successfully published in a high impact journal, and which had been viewed online thousands of times and even featured on the journal's Facebook page, was retracted out of the blue by an editor who refused to provide a reason, despite our repeated inquiries.

There are lots of reasons for the continuing prejudice, but ultimately it comes down to an old story: If you're too far ahead of the prevailing paradigm, the status quo will ignore you if you're lucky, or crush you if you're not. And besides the usual gnashing of teeth evoked by any paradigm clash, when it comes to psi the acceptance barrier is especially high because the phenomena we're interested in overlaps with reli-

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gious beliefs, spiritual concepts, occult practices, psychedelic experiences, the esoteric traditions, and popular entertainment tropes. These topics tend to evoke extreme emotions in academics, and when that happens any hope for rational discourse quickly disappears.

Honorton's recommendation for overcoming the prejudice was to normalize the paranormal through further research, but he also added that

we should give up our "para-" terms, even the one that serves to identify this [Parapsychological] Association. Psi phenomena are as relevant to physics and, I suspect, to neurophysiology, as they are to psychology. We are studying psychophysical interactions, and I would suggest that the term *psychophysics* more properly identifies the range of activities we have called parapsychological.

I agree. Our field has had a long history of inventing euphemisms like *remote viewing* and *anomalous cognition* to avoid the negative connotations associated with the various "p" terms: parapsychological, paranormal, psychical, psychic, and psi. All of these words have become associated in the popular mind with the leit-motif of horror films and fiction, and unfortunately, also with con artists. This word-association guarantees that no junior academic who wishes to gain tenure, and no senior academic who hopes to retain their grants, can afford to be linked to such terms.

This limits the potential membership of the PA to three categories: iconoclastic scientists and scholars who don't care what others think or are willing to risk social shunning and economic jeopardy, students who haven't had to contend with the consequences of violating the woo-woo taboo, and those whose income

doesn't depend on academic approval. This is a problem that, like Honorton, I'm convinced will persist until we get rid of the "para" taint.

Over the years, I've been contacted by many academics who are vitally interested in psi. For example, I've been a member of a quiet group of senior academics at a prominent university for over two decades. The group is not just interested in discussing psi; they've also been conducting their own psi experiments, and getting successful outcomes. But so far, because they are all well aware of the woo-woo taboo, their reports have remained locked away in file cabinet drawers. Given the many other scientists and scholars I've met who would love to be openly engaged in studying psi, I suspect that the level of interest in academia is about the same as it is among the general public.

In fact, a survey we recently conducted at IONS supports this speculation. We found that psi *experiences* (not beliefs) reported by scientists and engineers were at the same level as those reported by the general public and by IONS members. In all three of these groups the percentage of one or more psi-type experiences reported was above 90%.

So how do we overcome the taboo, triple the PA membership, and gain the ability to compete for funding from the larger foundations and federal agencies?

*[...] waiting until we have a larger heap of facts, or waiting until someone develops a psi-based technology or broadly acceptable theory, might eventually lead to positive front page stories [...]*

One approach – the one taken so far – is to do nothing and simply wait for the scientific mainstream to catch up with us. That strategy may work, but it might take a century or more, and it isn't clear if our meager resources will last that long. Nor is it clear that enough younger scientists and scholars will be able or willing to risk violating the taboo to keep the discipline alive. The other danger is that each new generation of isolated iconoclasts is practically forced to reinvent the wheel. And that's only if they can get past the revisionist history of the field as it's portrayed on Wikipedia.

There's another strategy. Consider a recent front-page story in the *New York Times* describing

the release of declassified videos of a UFO taken by a military jet aircraft.<sup>1</sup> UFOs have long been fodder for the tabloids, but the new twist is that this story appeared in one of the most prominent mainstream media outlets in the world, on a Sunday – which has the largest worldwide readership – and without any of the usual snarky dismissals. One of the authors of that article later wrote, again in the *New York Times*,

Our readers are plenty interested in unidentified flying objects. We know that from the huge response to our front-page Sunday article ... revealing a secret Pentagon program to investigate UFOs. The piece ... has dominated the most emailed and most viewed lists since.

So how does a story on UFOs get into the *New York Times*? Not easily, and only after a great deal of vetting, I assure you.... At a confidential meeting Oct. 4 in a Pentagon City hotel with several present and former intelligence officials and a defense contractor, [one of the reporters] met Luis Elizondo, the director of a Pentagon program she had never heard of: the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program.<sup>2</sup>

1 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/16/us/politics/pentagon-program-ufo-harry-reid.html>

2 [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/18/insider/secret-pentagon-ufo-program.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/18/insider/secret-pentagon-ufo-program.html?_r=0)

This episode represents an evolution in how the mainstream views a previously taboo subject, similar to the “sudden” acceptance of same-sex marriage and legalized marijuana in a growing list of countries. Such changes may seem sudden, but they're always preceded by decades of preparation.

What this tells me is that waiting until we have a larger heap of facts, or waiting until someone develops a psi-based technology or broadly acceptable theory, might eventually lead to positive front page stories in the *New York Times*. But given that we've been sitting on this promissory note for a very long time, and with no obvious breakthroughs, I propose that we need to lay the groundwork now to allow the “sudden” acceptance of parapsychology in the future.

How do we do that? The first step is to note why UFOs are now acceptable to the *New York Times*. It's not because a heap of facts convinced someone. The serious literature on UFOs makes it clear that something strange has been going on in the skies for a very long time. Rather, it's about the credibility of the Pentagon and their project's fancy title, *Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program*. That is, it's about changing the name of the phenomenon as well as the source of the information.

We are in much better shape

*Thus, of the various new names we might consider for the PA, the “Psychophysics Association,” or perhaps better, the “Psychophysical Association” seems to be uniquely appropriate.*

than UFOs in that we can bring scientific methods to bear and evoke the phenomena in the laboratory. You can't do that with UFOs. And the source of our information already includes top-tier universities and government programs. So what's left?

Changing the name. Honorton suggested that the PA should be called the “Psychophysics Association.” Some might object because there's already an International Society for Psychophysics, and a Society for Psychophysiological Research. The academic discipline of psychophysics focuses on physiological relationships between mind and body. The discipline was founded in the mid-1800s by German physicist Gustav Theodor Fechner, who, as I wrote in *Entangled Minds*:

...had an inspiration that led to the origins of modern experimental psychology and psychophysiology. Fechner's insight was based on his belief that mind and matter arise from the same, non-material, spiritual source. In his attempt to refute materialism by demonstrating relationships between mind and matter, he placed the new discipline of psychology on firm scientific grounds. Despite his many scientific achievements, his less celebrated colleagues considered his mystical inspirations the eccentricities of a mad genius.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, of the various new names we might consider for the PA, the “Psychophysics Association,” or perhaps better, the “Psychophysical Association” seems to be uniquely appropriate. Potential confusions with similar-named associations can be addressed by clearly stating our organization's purpose on our printed and online materials. Such a description might look something like this:

The Psychophysical Association (PA) is an international professional organization of scientists and scholars engaged in the multidisciplinary study of commonly reported human experiences suggesting that consciousness, broadly defined, has the capacity to transcend the

everyday boundaries of space and time, and to directly interact with the physical world. The purpose of the PA is to promote the scientific and scholarly study of these experiences and their implications...

Another concern I've heard about changing our organization's name is that it might put our AAAS-affiliation in jeopardy. That is not the case. I asked the person in charge at the AAAS what happens when an affiliate changes its name. The answer is they make the change in their ledger, and that's it. So a name-change would not affect our AAAS status at all. It is also worth noting that none of the existing AAAS-affiliated organizations contain the word *psychophysics* or *psychophysical*.

Changing our name is just one step toward smoothing the road to “suddenly” making the PA mainstream in the future. There are other steps we can take to prepare. But I thought I'd begin this process with one of the easiest things we can do right now. (Nothing is easy, but some things are easier than others.)

Please let me know what you think of my proposal, or if you have other suggested names. My only criterion is that the name be no more than four words and that it contains only recognizable terms (no neologisms). Send your comments to me at [dean@ions.org](mailto:dean@ions.org).

<sup>3</sup> Radin, D. (2006). *Entangled Minds*. Simon & Schuster, p. 63.

# The PA both

## This Calls for a Celebration!

| by SELMA HOFSTRA

In the spring of 1957, during the “Workshop in Parapsychology” at the Parapsychology Laboratory of Duke University, Dr. J.B. Rhine proposed to form a nucleus for a group of international parapsychologists. On June 19, 1957, the Parapsychological Association (PA) was created with Dr. R.A. McConnell as its first president. During 2017, on the weekend of June 16–17, the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary party of the PA was held at the premises of the PA office in Columbus, Ohio. The event was organized and hosted by the PA Executive Director Annalisa Ventola and supported by PA Vice President Wim Kramer.

The program was promising. On Friday evening, Wim Kramer presented a lecture entitled *The Spirits as Artist: An Introduction to Dutch Mediumistic Paintings of the Interbellum and the Messages They Convey* to the general public of Columbus. This was followed by a tasty, informal PA welcoming reception. On Saturday, the formal anniversary meeting was held with five presentations that were followed, in the evening, by a fabulous PA 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. PA Vice President Wim Kramer and I, Selma Hofstra from the

Johan Borgman Foundation, travelled from the Netherlands to attend this joyful weekend at the PA headquarters. A warm welcome of Executive Director Annalisa Ventola awaited us. Annalisa, as gracious host, showed us around Columbus and even took us for a short fascinating hike in the Ohio Hocking Hills State Park. We also joined her at Ohio University where she was invited to present an introductory lecture on parapsychology for students. Her lecture inspired several of the audience to hire a minivan to attend the celebration during the weekend at the PA office.

More than 30 people arrived early Saturday morning for the Annalisa’s opening talk titled “Another Milestone: 10 Reasons to Celebrate the Last 10 Years of Parapsychological Research.” The core mission of the PA has remained the same over the years although the organization itself has gone through many changes. Changes for the better, according to Annalisa, who looked back on the decade and counted down the 10 most memorable PA moments. For example, she

enthusiastically painted the picture of increasing professionalism within the field for its growing numbers of publications in mainstream journals and rising educational opportunities. Furthermore since 2015, the PA has enjoyed a physical office in Columbus, a city that Annalisa describes as “one of the most intelligent cities in the Midwest,” as it is oft-noted for its strong public library system, highest concentration of Fortune 1000 companies in any metropolitan area, and effective collaborations between government, business, and academia. The office is also located just a short distance from Ohio State University—the USA’s largest university.

This argument was reinforced by the number of students who attended the event.

The students of Ohio University (Athens) studied in class the book *The Super Natural* by PA member Jeffrey Kripal. For them it was exciting to meet him in person at the event. His presentation “A Garden Next Door: How One Woman Was Struck by Lightning, Talked to God, and Came Back to Dream the Future” was eye-opening for all. Psychologist Brandon Massullo presented his research in a talk entitled “Environmental Sensitivity: A Promising



Path for Parapsychological Inquiry.”

Although this research was conducted some years ago, the topic has become more important in recent years with the growing use of wireless base stations for mobile communications and the Internet.

The fourth lecture was delivered by a leading scientist in the parapsychological field: Edwin May. In a lively and humoristic manner, he presented an overview of the recently released and much talked about Star Gate archives which give a closer look into the reports of the U.S. government sponsored psi program during the Cold War (1972– 1995). As director of Stargate, Ed May shared his intriguing first-hand experiences about this secret defense program and its outcomes.

The last presentation of the day was the PA Vice Presidential Address by Wim Kramer entitled “60 Years of the Parapsychological Association: Exploring the Boundaries of Humankind” in which he explored highlights in the history of the field regarding the history of psychology. He showed some original footage of the healing practice of the famous Dutch psychic Gerard Croiset and discussed five murder cases of the 1960s in Ohio, an occurrence where Croiset was consulted while he was in Holland to help to solve the cases. Last but not least Kramer emphasized the importance of the ongoing digitization project of the PA to digitize all PA publications of the past 60 years and make them available for all on the internet. After a day full of lectures and discussions we gathered at Bleu & Fig for the PA 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. A marvellous dinner with exceptional tasty food and an inspiring warm atmosphere that made many stay until closing time.

All of the 45-minute talks were live-streamed and are available for



Edwin C. May unveiling the secrets of the Star Gate program.



Ohio University students enjoying the anniversary dinner at Bleu & Fig.

everyone to see on the YouTube channel of the PA: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCs3rgEjohp-mCPSWZA2k661Q>.

Once again, I thank our excellent hostess Annalisa Ventola for organizing this sparkling event in honor of the

PA. It was a big success thanks to the various interesting topics, prominent speakers, and marvellous beverages and dinner together. I'm looking forward to the next PA anniversaries to come!

# Parapsychological Anthropology and Psi-in-Process:

## Multi-Method Approaches to the Study of Psi in the Field Setting

### Parapsychological Anthropology

In anthropology, it was Andrew Lang (1898) who first argued so forcefully that his colleagues needed to embrace the findings, methods, and theories of psychical research. That is, anthropologists needed to take the possible existence of psychic phenomena seriously and to develop and apply systematic methods to examine the widespread alleged claims and accounts of supernormal phenomena in the magico-religious traditions of non-Western societies. Progress was slow. But following Lang's call, and then De Vesme's (1931) similar plea, which he backed with his important survey of psi-related activities in

non-Western societies, anthropologists began to increasingly report (and consider seriously) accounts of psi-like phenomena in non-Western societies (e.g., Barnouw, 1942; Elkin, 1945/1977). Still, field research itself did not yet focus on the phenomena nor did anthropologists develop a systematic method for determining their veridicality (i.e., proof) or for investigating the contextual dynamics and factors at play (i.e., process). (For reviews, see Giesler 1984b; Luke 2010). Regarding the focus on the phenomena in field-work, this would have to wait until Joe Long's (1977a) watershed symposium on parapsychology and anthropology at the 1974 American Anthropology Association (AAA) convention, out of which emerged



| by *PATRIC GIESLER*,  
*Gustavus Adolphus College*

a new sub-discipline, now called the “anthropology of consciousness” with its own AAA-affiliated society (SAC). While scientific or academic in intent, there was also a particular interest in anthropologists finding a forum for sharing



Patric Giesler studying the whole Piji divination consultation practice with the high priestess Dunga, of rural Bahia, Brazil.

their own anomalous experiences in the field, which they often did in the SAC journal. And there is now (since 2010) an outlet and forum for exchanging those experiences and insights through anthropologist Jack Hunter's magazine, *Paranthropology*. But that "transpersonal" emphasis (cf. Luke, 2010, p. 251) deterred the development of any systematic methods for studying psi in the field, proof and process, as I often discussed with Joe (Long) in the early days of the Society.

Now, on the other hand, from the psychical research and parapsychology side, the failure to take advantage of the exceedingly rich and detailed accounts by anthropologists of a huge diversity of non-Western magico-religious beliefs and practices, reportedly replete with diverse anomalous phenomena

was even more apparent. This was likewise true of the utter bypassing of anthropological understandings, models, and methods for studying "culture." Indeed, the culture and psi question was generally avoided by parapsychology until the Parapsychology Foundation's 1973 conference on parapsychology and anthropology (Angoff and Barth, 1974) and the critical studies and publications that followed (e.g., Kelly and Locke [1981]; Krippner [1980]; Reichbart [1976]).

However, since its gradual emergence, this field of parapsychological anthropology, as I call it (Giesler 1984b), had only offered weak or inadequate, and historically one-sided, methodological models for researching psi and psi-relevant activities in non-Western cultures. These were the predominantly ethnographic or predominantly experimental (ESP/PK testing) approaches.

### Ethnographic and Experimental Approaches

Regarding the ethnographic approach, although based on triangulated observations, interviewing, surveys, and long-term participation observation in non-Western societies with systematic documentation, what predominated in the decades after Lang were primarily anecdotal descriptions of anomalous phenomena tangential to the anthropologist's research

aims! However, some systematic observations with comparative analyses of patterns were reported later on (see Long 1977a; 1977b for reviews), and these were provocative. But there were also a host of problems. One was the susceptibility of these accounts and observations to the kinds of counterhypotheses (to the "psi" hypothesis) hurled at the Society for Psychical Research for its spontaneous case investigations by D. J. West (1948). Another was "data quality control" (Giesler 1984b, pp. 297-304).

Regarding the experimental approach, ESP/PK testing with the rigor of laboratory controls and statistical evaluation diminished or eliminated the concerns with unverified anecdotal accounts of psi in the field. Anthropologist Ronald Rose (1956) and parapsychologist Robert Van de Castle (1974b) carried out ESP and PK testing with Zener cards and dice among Australian aborigines and the Cuna (today *Guna*) of the San Blas Islands, respectively. While such studies offered statistical evidence for ESP and PK in non-Western societies, the psi in these studies was statistically defined, and the research was completely unrelated to the beliefs, practices, and processes credited with psychic bases by the cultures. Zener card tests are not credited for anything of any significance for these peoples, whereas shamanic divination or healing or magical rites were and are.



## Multi-Method Approaches

Consequently, I proposed (Giesler, 1984b) several strategies for advancing these methodological models through multi-method approaches: (a) more psi-directed ethnographic and culturally relevant experimental methods, each designed in a mutually complementary fashion and (b) a new integrative method I call “psi-in-process,” which investigates ostensible manifestations of psi and psi-related phenomena in the natural cultural contexts and conditions in which they are claimed and expected to occur, but with the rigor of experimental controls and validating measures obtained unobtrusively. In the following sections, I introduce each with an illustrative example from research where I applied the method proposed.

### A psi-directed Ethnographic

**Approach.** With this approach, the field researcher investigates the social, cultural, and psycho-cultural dynamics of culturally psi-relevant activities, such as magico-religious rituals, taking into account both anthropological and parapsychological and/or psychical research models of those dynamics. For example, I conducted a psi-directed ethnographic study of the Umbanda ritual trance divination consultation, or *consulta* (Giesler 1984a, 1985a), as part of a larger investigation of the three prominent African-derived,

magico-religious, spirit possession religions of Brazil (Candomblé, Caboclo, and Umbanda) and their divinatory and mediumistic practices. In the Umbanda *consulta*, a “client” consults an entranced “shaman” (or shaman-medium), possessed by his or her spirit guide (or *guia*) during a ceremony. The client delves into a host of personal problems with the shaman’s *guia*, which often includes questions about a lost or stolen object of value. The *guia*’s help, support, and guidance about the client’s urgent personal problems often had a big impact and promoted the client’s confidence in the *guia* and the *guia*’s advice, which is offered as charity and free. But in answer to the lost object question, instead of laying out a “free-response” description of where the object is or who had it, as I expected, the *guia* would instead instruct the client to perform a ritual at home that would summon the *guia*, who would then guide the client to find the object. After following several cases of clients who located their lost objects, I realized that this “shaman-client” exchange engendered “Batcheldorian” psychodynamics (Batcheldor 1984) that deepened the client’s belief in the *guia* and induced the client’s own ESP to find the object and not the shaman’s ESP.

**A Culturally Relevant Experimental Approach.** In this approach, PK and GESP testing are adapted to the culture, or ideally, to the kinds

of psi-related beliefs and practices of the peoples studied. In addition, the ethnographically informed experimental design revolves around critical social and cultural variables that theoretically might predict differences in psi ability, as in, for example, degrees of mediumistic trance training and expected differences in psi performance. While I prefer either a psi-directed ethnographic approach, as above, or psi-in-process, as I detail below, I have also applied a culturally relevant form of experimental testing in the field as part of that broader investigation of the three Brazilian magico-religious traditions.

For example, in one of these studies (Giesler 1985b), I carried out PK testing of initiated practitioners of each of the three traditions on a Schmidt REG *with* and *without* trance-significant symbols of deity figures as targets. These figures were fundamental to the practitioners’ trance healing practices, which may plausibly have been PK-mediated. Also, the three traditions varied in the rigor of their mediumistic and other psi-relevant training (Candomblé > Caboclo > Umbanda). So, I hoped for a parallel trend in PK performance. As predicted, “cultists” (from the positive Brazilian term, *culto*) obtained significant PK hitting overall and with the deity figures as targets alone. They also scored nearly significantly better *with* the deity targets than *without* them and their PK scoring was the reverse of the PK scoring



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of all three non-cult control groups. The performance of the Caboclo and Umbanda practitioners, who were much more open to “playing with” the PK test machine, fit the predicted linear trend in training (Caboclo > Umbanda). However, the very conservative and private Candomblé practitioners did not; they did poorly and demonstrated a very high reactivity to the PK testing itself. In another study, I administered forced choice GESP tests with ritual object targets, but now experienced very high test reactivity and psychosocial upsets by all cultists (see Giesler 1986 for details).

#### **The Psi-in-Process Approach.**

Here, the aim is to capture or confirm psi, as it were, in its natural process, or that is, by the conditions expected and claimed by the culture-bearers, yet with the rigor of experimental control and

statistical evaluation and without (or minimally) altering or disturbing the context. Psi-in-process is modelled after the “unobtrusive measures” method of psychology and cross-cultural psychology (e.g., Bochner 1980). An unobtrusive measures experiment takes place in an ordinary social context, like at the entrances to a supermarket, in order to discover, for instance, white suburban subjects’ reactions to a racial variable, such as a black man standing by one of two entrances. This design avoids the extremely problematic “test reactivity” of a laboratory task, like with the experimental GESP testing of magico-religious practitioners above. However, unlike the “unobtrusive measures” method, psi-in-process does not manipulate the contexts to elicit subjects’ reactions, but rather examines variables already inherent in the context. This unobtrusive psi-in-process approach, when well-complemented with the appropriate ethnographic data, is a substantial advance over previous methods (Giesler 1984b, pp. 309-315; 325-330). Divination rites, healing ceremonies, magic, sorcery, ritual trance mediumship, poltergeists, and sitter groups are but a few of the psi-relevant contexts that are readily amenable to psi-in-process research.

Indeed, I conducted a psi-in-process investigation of a divination rite, the Umbanda ritual trance consultation, or *consulta*, described above, and I specifically focused on

whether the Batcheldorian psychodynamics of the shaman-client exchange elicited the client’s own ESP to find a lost object (Giesler 1985c). For the study, I obtained 10 non-cult Brazilians who had or were interested in consulting an Umbanda shaman over personal matters (which was critical to potentially engaging the psi-conductive psychodynamics) and had each perform two “trials” under two conditions to find a “lost object” by ESP, one *with* the consultation and the other *without*. Presumably, if the psychodynamics engendered the clients’ ESP to find the objects, their success would be greater *with* the consultation versus alone *without* having consulted an Umbanda shaman. As described earlier, when asked about a lost object, the *guia* of the entranced shaman would tell the client to perform a ritual at home, think of the *guia* and the lost object during the ritual, and the *guia* would then guide the client to the object.

Clients then did all of this, and after performing the ritual, drew pictures of what came to mind as to the location of the object with clarifying comments. These were then evaluated by independent judges against pictures of four target sites, one of them with the object. The same procedure was carried out *without* a consultation. To “lose” the object, clients lent me an important object, which I placed on a table, and it was picked up by a co-experimenter who gave it to an assistant to leave at one of four

sites (in two sets of sites) (Giesler 1985c, pp. 141-143).

As part of the psi-in-process method, I also constructed a “psi-in-process reliability” measure of how much like the “real thing” the divination consultation was, including a “clientness” score that reflected how much like an actual ordinary Umbanda client each psi-in-process client was. The idea was that clients who were less like actual Umbanda clients or who were not impressed by the counsel of the shaman’s *guia* on personal matters would not benefit as much from the *consulta* psychodynamics as would a client with a higher clientness score (see Giesler 1985c for details). While all hypotheses were in the right direction and nearly significant, a provocative finding was the correlation of client ESP with the clientness score. Separating out, post hoc, the clients with the highest clientness scores, their ESP scoring was significantly better *with* than *without* the consultation.

In sum, I have traced the early development of a parapsychological anthropology to my own proposal of multi-method approaches for studying psi in non-Western cultures: psi-directed ethnographic and culturally relevant experimental methods, so that the strengths of one offset the weaknesses of the other, and a new multi-method approach, psi-in-process, which I argued is a considerable advance over the other methods.

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61<sup>st</sup>

Annual Convention of the  
Parapsychological  
Association

August  
2-5  
2018

Institute of  
• Noetic Sciences  
Petaluma, California



# The Centenary Conference of the Norwegian Society for Parapsychology

## One hundred years of parapsychology in Norway

In December 1917 a group of academics and other people met in Oslo, Norway's capital, and founded the Norwegian Society for Psychological Research (SPR), which was modelled after the British SPR. One of the founding members was Miss Hermione Ramsden, a psychological researcher in England, who moved to Norway around 1912. The first president was professor of social economy Oskar Jaeger. Professor Harald Schjelderup, the pioneer of psychology in Norway, was the president for 6 years.

Initially, the strongest interest was the scientific investigation of spiritist séances, but within a short period of time, a wider interest was shown, evidenced in

the Society's journal. The Norwegian Society became very active and had more than 200 members within 3 years of its inception. It hosted the International Conference of Psychological Research in Oslo in 1935.

After a period of hibernation during World War II, the Norwegian SPR returned to grow the membership back to numbers that it saw at its inception. There is no current research activity in the Society, but the main activity is the offering of lectures (approximately 8 lectures per year) with 2 delivered by invited researchers from abroad. The Society also has a journal with a mix of scientific articles, spontaneous experiences, and book reviews.

## The Centenary Conference

| by JON MANNSÅKER

A 100-years' jubilee was celebrated June 9–11, 2017 with a conference in Oslo. This was a great success with 70–80 people attending every presentation. We invited 7 foreign and 5 Norwegian lecturers to give our members and the general public an impression of the status and range of modern parapsychological research.

## Parapsychology – a Review of the Evidence

**Etzel Cardeña** gave an overview of the status for different paranormal phenomena by referring to meta-analyses on 10 different research areas in parapsychology. The conclusions were the following: There is consistent evidence for psi phenomena across research areas and across time; the





effect sizes for psi research are overall small, but for some areas they are comparable to accepted areas in psychology and medicine; psi effects cannot in general be explained by poorly controlled studies, or on selective publishing.

### TV Series on Haunted Houses

**Tom Strømnaess**, a TV host, presented a TV series that has aired in Norway for 12 years. It is not scientific in nature; rather, it is a combination of both entertaining and serious topics and

Attendees of the Centenary Conference of the  
Norwegian Society for Parapsychology.



is designed as an honest documentation of what normal people from all walks of life have experienced. The production company is contractually bound to not distort any happenings! During the series, a sensitive (clairvoyant) is taken to a house without preloading of information and gives spontaneous impressions, in most cases including spirits of deceased, sometimes with factual information about them. The impressions are often largely consistent with the experiences of the people in the house. This represents a rare collection of 122 documented “haunted house” cases with a high degree of trustworthiness.

### Ganzfeld Telepathy-What Have We Learned?

**Adrian Parker** explained the ganzfeld methodology which is the most robust experiment in academic parapsychology. Several lessons were discussed: It is important to have videos with a strong emotional content and useful to have audio recordings of the receiver’s impressions copied onto the videotape in parallel. Parker noted the technique only succeeds for experimenters and participants who have previously had their own psychic experienc-

es. A psi-conducive ambience is important. Further progress can be made with high quality psi experiences, such as using participants selected for openness to inner experiences and altered states of consciousness.

### Precognition: From Life to Lab

**Caroline Watt** presented the phenomenology of precognitive experiences and the problems with evaluating them. Differences between prospective and retrospective reports of cognitive experiences were highlighted. She focused on controlled dream precognition tests, most of them done with participants sleeping at home and then sending in dream reports in the morning.

The numerous precognitive studies of people in a waking state were discussed. They have been forced-choice experiments with a limited number of alternative targets. This method allows fast testing, automated recording and score calculations. A meta-analysis by Honorton and Ferrari (1989) concludes that there is a small but very robust effect. Future research on precognition with controlled methods which resemble natural conditions was encouraged.

*The numerous precognitive studies of people in a waking state were discussed. They have been forced-choice experiments with a limited number of alternative targets.*

### Arguments and Evidence for and Against an Afterlife

**Erlendur Haraldsson** first gave a brief overview of philosophical arguments for and against, before concentrating on research on experiences indicating an afterlife. These are the following:

- Encounters with the dead (reported by 1 in 4 people in Europe)
- Death-bed visions indicating contact with a post-death reality
- Near-death experiences, several studies conducted in university hospitals
- Studies of mediumistic communications with strong mediums, some with significant statistical results





Panelists from left to right: Dean Radin, Walter Von Lucadou, Caroline Watt, Adrian Parker, and Jon Mannsåker.

- Claims of reincarnation memories, some have been verified, a few with birthmarks related to mode of death in previous life.

This research using scientific methods has resulted in empirical arguments suggesting life after death. However, the findings and interpretations are still being discussed.

### Research on and Experiences with Healing

**Jon Mannsåker** presented an overview of research into healing and other direct influences on living systems (DMILS) relevant to healing. Data from recent meta-analyses support direct mental influence improving peoples' health. Future healing research should focus more on

controlled clinical healing studies in a natural environment. He concluded that scientific research supports that healing is a real phenomenon beyond placebo and other effects.

### Physics and the Non-local Mind

**Dean Radin** explained how psychic phenomena share the properties of non-local time and space

*There were very many movements of objects, locking of doors, ringing of bells, throwing of stones etc., with more than one adult witness and also the children.*

with quantum physics. Then he presented the experiments conducted at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) to explore the possible role of quantum concepts in mind-matter interaction by using optical systems. These include the Michelson interferometer, double-slit arrangements, and entangled photons. All experiments gave evidence that suggest non-local mind and non-local matter interact in robust ways.

### Unconscious Measures of Psi

**Chris Roe** described how we can research unconscious psi in two ways: physiological responses and unconscious modifications to overt behaviour or decisions. He presented experiments on premonitions of emotional pictures (giving electro-

dermal activity responses *before* pictures were selected), subconscious influence on selections leading to an unknown pleasant task, and Daryl Bem's retroactive priming tasks. The results show that the effects are small but robust and similar across types.

### A Norwegian Poltergeist Study

**Kjell Flekkøy** presented a case with strong poltergeist activity in a kindergarten in Norway, which he had been asked to investigate by the municipality. There were very many movements of objects, locking of doors, ringing of bells, throwing of stones etc., with more than one adult witness and also the children. His conclusion was that most of the events could not be explained by any normal means: an unknown non-random factor must be assumed.

### Poltergeist during the Conference?

Towards the end of the above lecture one of the participants in the back of the conference room heard strange sounds/bangs from a long coffee table, and saw a large coffee container slowly moving towards the edge of a table, without any visible cause, then being pushed off the table,

falling with a bang on the floor and spilling coffee. During the next lecture another participant was standing close to the same table, and suddenly noticed the coffee cups which were lined up, vibrating for about a full minute. There was no visible movement of the table, no vibration of the floor, and no heavy traffic outside the building. Strange!

### Clinical Parapsychology

**Walter von Lucadou** explained his Model of Pragmatic Information, which has proved fruitful to understand paranormal phenomena and clinical cases. Paranormal experiences can be described as "embodiment disorders" and the MPI gives strategies for coping with such disorders in a way to enable clients to help themselves with, for example, possession, precognitive dreaming or poltergeist experiences.

### Closing Remarks

We received spontaneous feedback from both participants and lecturers that they had enjoyed the conference. One of the lecturers said that this had been one of the best parapsychological conferences he had attended recently. This gives us inspiration for the future work of our Society.



# Digitizing the European Journal of Parapsychology and the Research in Parapsychology Series

In 2015, I presented a poster documenting our efforts to digitize the back issues of the *Journal of Parapsychology* (JP). One might object that the JP back issues are already available at [lexscien.org](http://lexscien.org). However, at [lexscien.org](http://lexscien.org) one can only access 1,200 pages a month, which is a problematic limit when doing a comprehensive search, and the contrast and resolution available there are not ideal for printing. Thus, I initiated the JP digitization project (Tremmel et al., 2015). By now, I have scanned all of the back issues from 1937 to 2008, comprising about 26,000 pages. It will still take some time till these can be made available because postprocessing is time-consuming.

In the meantime, I have been asked to digitize three more publications. Sybo Schouten, one of the first editors of the *European Journal of Parapsychology* (EJP), asked me to digitize the back issues of the EJP that are not freely available online yet as well as the *Research Letter* (RL) of the Parapsychological Laboratory at the University of Utrecht, which accompanied the EJP. Annalisa Ventola, executive director of the PA, asked me to digitize the *Research in Parapsychology* (RiP) book series. As with the JP, I have scanned all three publications (about 4,400 pages for the EJP, about 700 pages for RL, and about 5,400 pages for RiP) on a voluntary basis, and I am almost done with the postprocessing. Some digitized EJP and RL volumes are already available at <http://hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl/european-journal-parapsychology/>

| by MICHAEL TREMMEL,  
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[nl/european-journal-parapsychology/](http://hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl/european-journal-parapsychology/) (thanks to Wim Kramer for providing the webspace). All three publications should be made available at the PA website some time in 2018.

## On the Digitization Process

The process is already described in Tremmel et al. (2015). Thus, I will reuse some passages from it verbatim without indication and add some comments on why I chose to do things the way described. The Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene in Freiburg deserves credit for providing the vast majority of EJP, RiP, and RL volumes,

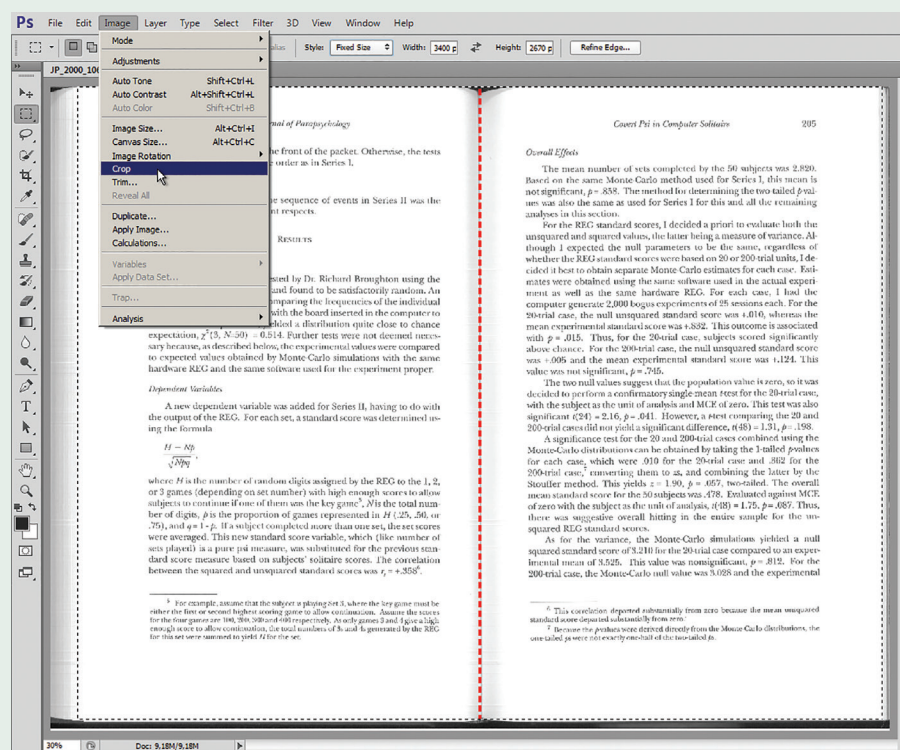


Figure 1. Cropping the image with the binding edge close to the center of the image (red-dashed).

and Wim Kramer for providing several *EJP* and *RL* volumes.

All volumes were scanned on a photocopier at the Bender Institute of Neuroimaging at the University of Giessen. To obtain consistent quality, fixed exposure and resolution settings (300 ppi) were used. Grayscale images and where needed color images of the scanned two-page spreads were saved as a multi-page TIFF file, the only format with lossless compression available on the photocopier. Each TIFF file was converted to individual PNG files, using ImageMagick, for further processing with lossless compression.

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 (see Fig. 1). 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 (see Fig. 2). 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, preserving details. 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, preserving details.

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

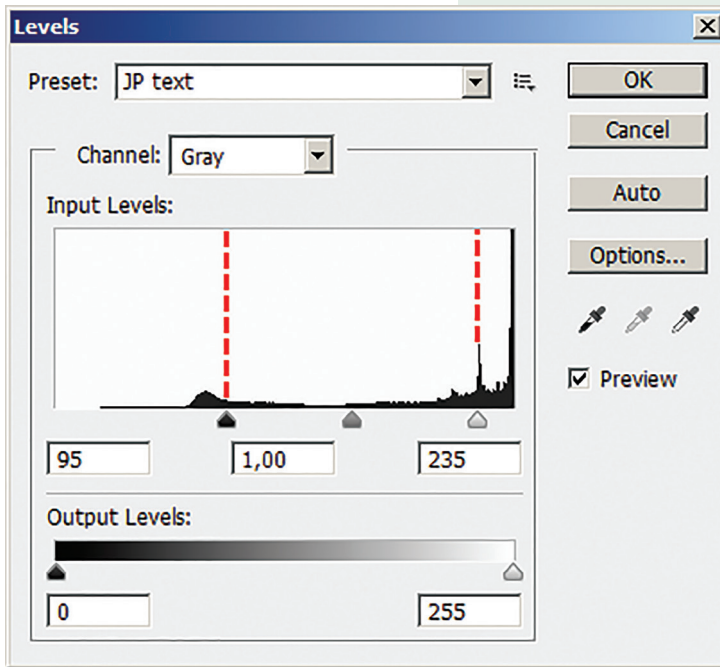


Figure 2. Adjusting the dynamic range of the text (cut-off positions red-dashed).

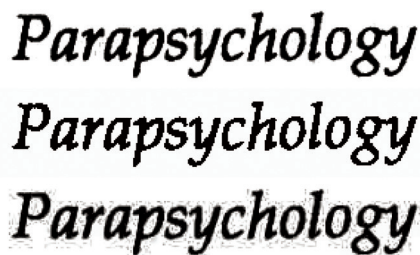


Figure 3. Enlarged text scan excerpt; top: eight color PNG image; middle: two color PNG image; bottom: JPG image with compression artifacts.

compression. 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, 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 PDF output style was set to “Searchable Image (Exact).” Using this setting, the recognized text is added as a hidden layer and the original images are retained. This is important or else it would not be safe to quote from the digital version because of recognition errors, as it is the case with older digitized issues of the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* and the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*.

In the Callas pdfToolbox, all the notdef glyphs, which are unfortunately 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.

The use of a tonal range of at least eight colors results in improved legibility and better OCR results (compare top and middle in Fig. 3). Yet the size of the PDF files remains relatively small because the size of the image files was optimized. The images show no compression artifacts because PNG files were used (compare top and bottom in Fig. 3).

Journals in digital format 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. Thus, I hope that this description of the digitization process might serve as a model for similar projects.

## Literature

Tremmel, M., Ott, U., Bauer, E., Vaitl, D., Ventola, A., & Palmer, J. (2015). Digitizing the Journal of Parapsychology [Abstract]. *Journal of Parapsychology*, 79, 165-167.

# Experimenter and Other Effects

## in the Historical Séance Literature



| by CARLOS S. ALVARADO,  
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Various reviews on the topic of experimenter effects have been published in parapsychology (Palmer & Miller, 2015; Roe, 2016; White, 1977). Many have argued that investigators and sitters can affect the phenomena produced by mediums, a topic extended by some to surrounding beliefs and the traditions of Spiritualism. Here I present some

examples of such discussions published before the 1930s. While it is possible to talk about psi experimenter effects, I am

Also concerned with effects apparently mediated by attitudes and other socio-psychological processes, including suggestion and expectation.

An example of psychological influences on mediums appeared in the *Spiritualist Newspaper*—Russian student of psychic phenomena Alexander Aksakof (1875) wrote a critique of Allan Kardec, arguing that Kardec affected the content of the mediumistic communications of his mediums. He was particularly concerned with the support French communications gave to the idea of reincarnation. Aksakof emphasized that Kardec used writing mediums, “who it is well known pass so easily under the psychological influence of preconceived ideas” (p. 75).

An anonymous (1875) writer in the same publication suggested

that if reincarnation was discussed in England, “plenty of spirits will begin to teach it, the reason being that the minds of the various mediums will be set buzzing by the arguments on the subject mooted by persons around them, after which there will be plenty of spirit messages about reincarnation” (p. 170).

In Germany Eduard Von Hartmann (1885), commented as follows about the influence of spiritist tradition: “As mediums learn to know the tradition of Spiritist circles before they get beyond physical manifestations and thought-reading, it is explicable that certain figures are of stereotyped reproduction with quite different mediums, as Harlequin, Pierrot, Columbine, &c., in the Harlequinade; they call themselves John King, Katie King, &c, . . .” (p. 82).

Similarly, Williams James (1890) discussed the issue in the first volume of *The Principles of Psychology* in terms of the influence of the zeitgeist. After commenting on similarities in the personalities



manifested in mediums' controls, and some common topics mentioned by them, James wrote:

Whether all sub-conscious selves are peculiarly susceptible to a certain stratum of the Zeitgeist, and get their inspiration from it, I know not; but this is obviously the case with the secondary selves which become 'developed' in spiritualist circles ...The subject assumes the role of a medium simply because opinion expects it of him under the conditions which are present; and carries it out with a feebleness or a vivacity proportionate to his histrionic gifts. But the odd thing is that persons unexposed to spiritualist traditions will so often act in the same way when they become entranced... (p. 394).

The topic was also discussed in relation to the mediumship of Eusapia Palladino. "Eusapia is . . . eminently suggestible. This suggestibility, which may be increased in the state of trance, may have psychological consequences such that the will of the medium is largely influenced by that of the experimenters, by their desires, by their suspicions, by their prejudices." (de Rochas, 1896, p. 259). This led a group of researchers to state in the introduction of a séance report that they were aware that the medium was not an instrument and that negative attitudes and extreme suspicion could produce negative

effects (Sabatier, de Rochas, de Gramont, Maxwell, Dariex, & de Watteville, 1896).

French physician Gustave Geley, writing under the pseudonym of E. Gyel (1899), wrote that one of many possible causes of mediumistic communications was "notions suggested voluntarily or not by the sitters" (p. 92).

In his classic *From India to the Planet Mars* Théodore Flournoy (1900) analyzed communications produced by Hélène Smith, whose real name was Élise Catherine Müller. The communications consisted in part of stories about previous lives and travels to planet Mars. In his conclusion, Flournoy wrote:

We must also take into consideration the enormous suggestibility and auto-suggestibility of mediums, which render them so sensitive to all the influences of spiritistic reunions, and are so favorable to the play of those brilliant subliminal creations in which, occasionally, the doctrinal ideas of the surrounding environment are reflected together with the latent emotional tendencies of the medium herself. (p. 443)

Flournoy stated that he talked to the medium and explained to her his reasons to believe these were creations of her subliminal mind, failing to convince her. But he believed that his critiques about Mars and the Martian language had some impact on

Smith, leading her to produce new phenomena.

In an article Flournoy (1901) published later about Hélène Smith in the *Archives de Psychologie*, he speculated about the effect his book had on the medium, that it basically gave her ideas for new subconscious flights of fancy, which he discusses in some detail (including more descriptions of Mars and romances about Uranus and the Moon). Interestingly, Flournoy wrote: "In my opinion, contrary to what is advocated often in this field, it is not good for a medium to be studied too long by the same investigator, because the latter, despite its precautions, inevitably ends by shaping the suggestible subconsciousness of its subject . . ." (p. 116), which prevents new developments. This situation, he stated, is "sort of a psychological ankylosis" (p. 116) affecting the medium who reacts to being observed by having difficulties in showing phenomena other than those he or she believes are expected by the observer.

The well-known astronomer Camille Flammarion (1907) suggested that Victorien Sardou's (1858) drawings of houses on planet Jupiter were "the reflex of the general ideas in the air" (p. 26). Many others believed that the ideas of the circle could affect mediumistic communications (e.g., Lebedzinski, 1924; Maxwell, 1903/1905; Sudre, 1926). Maxwell believed that spirit personalities, or personifications, were suggestible. He wrote "that the role

*Referring to Eusapia Palladino, Julian Ochorowicz (1896) stated that the sitters could project ideas on the medium. This included suspicions of fraud that could produce actual fraudulent actions in the medium.*

played by the personification varies with the composition of the circle. It will always be the spirit of a dead or living person with spiritists. But the roles are more varied if the circle be composed of people who are not spiritists . . . ” (p. 65).

Amy Tanner (1910) believed that Mrs. Piper’s controls were educated by some of her researchers. In her view, “the various believers have framed a theory, which, being offered to the control, was accepted as everything is which is given it sympathetically. The controls themselves have thus been given a spiritistic education for over twenty years in all, so that whatever they were in the beginning, they are now thoroughly dyed-in-the-wool Spiritists” (p. 311). In later years René

Sudre (1926) wrote about this, particularly in his book *Personnages d’au-delà* (Sudre, 1946).

Another interesting mention of the influence of sitters was that presented by Eleanor Sidgwick (1915) in her study of séances held with Mrs. Piper. In her view:

That the sitters must influence the trance communications to some extent is . . . obvious. For one thing, they are themselves personages in the drama, and the part they play in it and the way they play it must affect the way the trance personalities play theirs . . . And in the trance drama the sitters not only largely determine the subjects of conversation, but the personages who shall take part in it. They explicitly or tacitly demand that their own friends shall manifest themselves and produce evidence of identity, or give information on particular points (Sidgwick, 1915, p. 294).

Interestingly, there were also speculations about physical mediumship. I will refer here only to ideas related to two mediums. Referring to Eusapia Palladino, Julian Ochorowicz (1896) stated that the sitters could project ideas on the medium. This included suspicions of fraud that could produce actual fraudulent actions in the medium. Also, materialist sitters could influence the medium to produce phenomena looking as a force with

no apparent consciousness or independence, but in spiritist-oriented circles the manifestations could be of a more spiritist character. This was actually the case with reports coming from the Circolo Scientifico Minerva, from Italy, which had many members convinced of discarnate agency (Venzano, 1907).

Enrico Morselli also wrote about Palladino. In his view, spiritism illustrates the “general law of imitation” (Morselli, 1908, p. 122). He was referring to the suggestions delivered by Giovanni Damiani, an early supporter of Palladino, who he believed “educated” the medium, a process continued by a later supporter, Ercole Chiaia. According to Morselli suggestion always “shapes, or modifies, or enlivens the phenomena of which the highly susceptible nervous system of patients and mediums is capable of” (p. 122).

Other speculations were also presented about W.J. Crawford’s studies of medium Kathleen Goligher and her mediumistic circle (e.g., Crawford, 1916). An aspect of this work consisted of Crawford’s ideas of psychic levers responsible for table levitations, which were supported by weigh measurements. Various writers, among them Ernesto Bozzano (1929), René Sudre (1926), and Albert von Schrenck-Notzing (1920/1925), argued that Crawford’s results were influenced by his ideas and expectations as a mechanical engineer. According to Barrett (1921): “In the case of Dr.

Crawford's experiments the ideas of the medium, Miss Goligher, were derived from the mechanical conceptions of Dr. Crawford; which he freely expressed to all." That is, instead of having findings confirming mechanical principles behind table levitations, it was believed that Crawford influenced the medium with his conceptions of the process, conceptions which "shaped" the phenomena following mechanical ideas. The reality of the phenomena was not questioned, but the nature of the process was.

To conclude, I would like to remind my readers that the above-mentioned ideas consisted of theoretical speculations presented after the fact, and not necessarily descriptions of what actually took place in the séance room, or more precisely, in the mind of the medium and sitters. Second, we also need to remember that many similar ideas were also prevalent in the hypnosis literature.

These, and other ideas mentioned here, are somewhat different from our current conception of experimenter's effects generally limited to the modern experimental setting. But they are conceptually related, at least in terms of the influence of unexpected variables.

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# Relevant

## Articles Relevant to Parapsychology in Journals of Various Fields (XXIV)

This is the twenty-fourth *Mindfield* column on publications of parapsychological relevance in mainstream scientific journals. Gerd Hövelmann compiled the past twenty-three, and since his passing, this marks the first instalment without contributions from our late colleague, who is deeply missed. *Mindfield* 9.1 (May 2017) was dedicated to the life and work of Gerd.

Renaud Evrard and Maurice van Luijtelaar assented to the request by *Mindfield's* previous editor Etzel Cardeña to carry forward the tracing and selection of relevant articles. In continuing the bibliographic column, we will exert every effort to meet the standards that were for so many years the hallmark of Gerd's scientific endeavours.

Including the 126 articles below, the grand total of articles published in this bibliography stands at 1631. We invite PA members to forward relevant recent articles to [mauricevanluijtelaar4@outlook.com](mailto:mauricevanluijtelaar4@outlook.com) or [evrardrenaud@gmail.com](mailto:evrardrenaud@gmail.com). These

articles should be published in peer-reviewed mainstream journals in the English language that are not devoted to parapsychological themes or to subjects related to parapsychology. Books or book chapters will not be included.

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