

Abstracts of Presented Papers

56th Annual Convention of the Parapsychological Association





56th Annual Convention

Viterbo, Italy
August 8-11, 2013

Abstracts of Presented Papers

Massimo Biondi, Ph.D.
Patrizio E. Tressoldi, Ph.D.
Program Co-Chairs

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INTRODUCTION

As Program and Arrangements Chairs of this year's Convention, it is a pleasure for us to welcome you to the 56th Parapsychological Association Convention. We are particularly pleased, since this is the first time such an event has been hosted in Italy, a country renowned for its cultural tradition - even if people think it has not contributed so much to the development of the parapsychology. As we are going to discuss in a special panel on Sunday, the studies and research in this field have been broadly performed from the middle of the nineteenth century until our times. We think that Italy is the right place where an important event like the Annual Convention of the Parapsychological Association can take place.

We have chosen this venue since it is exactly half way between the birth place of Luigi Fantappiè (Viterbo) and the place where he is buried (Bagnaia). Fantappiè was one of the greatest mathematicians of the last century and with his work on advanced potentials (the backward-in-time solution of the fundamental equations) he paved the way to the understanding of anomalous phenomena.

During the next few days we will have the opportunity to be involved in a variety of scientific contributions, authored by researchers and scholars coming from four continents: North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. The program is rather rich, since it deals with experimental, methodological, and theoretical issues, historical topics, and some special presentations. It consists indeed of 21 full papers, seven research briefs, and three poster presentations. In addition there will be a special presentation by Etzel Cardeña on altered states of consciousness, surrealism and Psi, one workshop on statistical issues by Jessica Utts, a symposium on historical topics and a final panel devoted to the contributions to parapsychology by Italian authors. Moreover there will be a Presidential Address by PA President Alejandro Parra on clinical parapsychology, and an Invited Address on the origins of consciousness by professor Simon Thorpe.

We want to thank all the members of the Program Committee for their invaluable work of selecting and reviewing the submitted papers, so that we can offer scientific materials of the highest level - not only to those ones present at the convention, but to all colleagues in the world.

Furthermore, in the evening we will have the pleasure to experience a merging of science and food. As you know, food and culture are the most precious things Italy can offer its guests.

Our thanks to all the PA Convention Committee for their continuous support and assistance in the organization of the convention. We have to thank, in particular, the PA Executive Director Annalisa Ventola, and our group of student volunteers, who will be assisting us throughout the convention.

Finally, thanks for coming to Viterbo, this beautiful medieval town, because we know it has not been so easy to get here for most of you.

We hope you will enjoy this Convention... that now is on. *Buon lavoro!*

The Program Chairs

Massimo Biondi Patrizio Tressoldi

The Arrangements Chairs

Antonella Vannini Ulisse Di Corpo

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8TH, 2013

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>
4 - 7:00pm	Registration (Reception Area)
7 - 9:00pm	Opening Reception (Dining Hall)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 2013

All Convention Sessions in Aula 1

7:00–8:30am Continental breakfast

Registration: open 8:00am to 9:00am and during breaks

9:00am **Welcome & Opening Announcements**

Alejandro Parra, President

Patrizio Tressoldi & Massimo Biondi, Program Chairs

Ulisse di Corpo & Antonella Vannini, Arrangements Chairs

Paper Session 1: Theoretical issues

Session Chair: *John Palmer*

9:15am *Adrian Parker*: Are successful experimenters psychic?

9:40am *Jon Taylor*: The nature of precognition

10:05am *Antonio Giuditta*: The nature and phylogenetic origin of mind

10:30am **Coffee break**

Paper Session 2: Methodological issues

Session Chair: *Patrizio Tressoldi*

11:00am *Jan Dalkvist*: How to handle expectation bias in presentiment experiments: A recommendation

11:25am **Workshop 1:** *Jessica Utts: Understanding and applying good statistical principles*

Session 1: A basic overview of hypothesis testing; How to interpret p-values; How to interpret confidence intervals; What can be learned from confidence intervals that differs from what can be learned from hypothesis tests

12:10pm **Short break**

12:25pm **Session 2:** *The meaning of effect size and why it's important to report effect sizes; How to define replication; Statistical power and how it should be considered when designing a study; A basic explanation of Bayesian analysis*

1:00pm **Lunch break**

Paper Session 3: Experimental evidence. 1

Session Chair: *Dick Bierman*

2:30pm *Aron Bijl & Dick J. Bierman*: Retro-active training of rational vs. intuitive thinkers

2:55pm *John Palmer*: Extrasensory perception, dissociation, and motor automatisms

3:20pm *Debra Lynne Katz & Michelle Bulgatz*: Remote viewers correctly predict the outcome of the 2012 Presidential election

3:45pm *Dick Bierman & Thomas Rabeyron*: Can Psi research sponsor itself? Simulations and results of an automated ARV-casino experiment

4:10pm **Coffee break**

4:40pm *Serena M. Roney-Dougal, Adrian Ryan & David Luke*: Follow-up study of the relationship between local geomagnetic activity and psychic awareness

5:05pm *Peter Bancel*: Is the Global Consciousness Project an ESP experiment?

5:30pm *Alejandro Parra & Juan Carlos Argibay*: Psi and death of the person-target: An experiment with highly emotional iconic representations

5:55pm **Closing & Announcements for Evening**

Evening events

7:00pm **Dinner**

8:30pm *Etzel Cardeña*: Exploring other realities: Altered states of consciousness, psi, and surrealism (special presentation)

Introduction to Presidential Address, *Massimo Biondi*

9:00pm *Alejandro Parra, Presidential Address*: Clinical parapsychology and its contribution to psi research...or how can you cope with your fear of psi?

Closing & Announcements for Saturday

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10TH, 2013

- 7:00am Continental breakfast,
Registration: Open 8:00am to 8:30am and during breaks
- 8:30am **Paper Session 4: *Experimental evidence. 2***
Session Chairs: *Serena M. Roney-Dougal & Mario P. Varvoglis*
- 8:35am *Mario P. Varvoglis, Peter Bancel, Djohar si Ahmed, Jean-Paul Bailly, & Céline Béguian: The Sharefield: A novel approach for forced-choice GESP research*
- 9:00am *Hideyuki Kokubo, Takako Usui, Choko Shimahara, Eri Minami, Takeshi Shimizu, Osamu Takagi, Kimiko Kawano, & Mikio Yamamoto: Competition and inhibition among healing ways of Chakra-activating type, DNA-rewriting (language-leading) type and energy-circulation-improving type*
- 9:25am *Gerhard A. Mayer: A remarkable photographic anomaly and the social dynamics of its interpretation*
- 9:40am *Everton de Oliveira Maraldi & Stanley Krippner: A biopsychosocial approach to creative dissociation: Remarks on a case of mediumistic painting*
- 9:55am **Coffee break**
- 10:30am *Takeshi Shimizu, Hideyuki Kokubo & Masato Ishikawa: Decomposition of field RNG outputs using Haar wavelets: A music experiment*
- 10:45am *Jacob Glazier: Analysis of everyday mind-matter interaction narratives using the descriptive phenomenological method*
- 11:00am *Antonio Giuditta: A simple method to quantitatively determine human bioenergetic fields*
- 11:15am *Göran Brusewitz & Adrian Parker: The Gothenburg-Kings College Twin Research: Findings and prospects*
- 11:30am **Paper Session 5: *Individual differences. 1***
Session Chair: *Renaud Evrard*
- 11:30am *Alejandro Parra: The cost of being different: The relationship between paranormal experiences and positive/negative schizotypy*
- 11:55am *Renaud Evrard: From symptom to difference: "Hearing voices" as a paradigm for clinical practice with exceptional experiences*
- 12:20pm *Leonardo Breno Martins & Wellington Zangari: Spontaneous anomalous experiences: Investigating psychosocial dimensions and scientific explanations for exotic supernormal technological cases in Brazil*
- Lunch break**
- Paper Session 6: *Individual differences. 2***
Session Chair: *Caroline Watt*
- 2:30pm *Caroline Watt, Natalie Ashley, Jack Gillett, Megan Halewood, & Rebecca Hanson:*

Abstracts of Presented Papers

- Psychological factors in precognitive dream experiences: The role of paranormal belief, selective recall and propensity to find correspondences
2:55pm *Milan Valášek, Caroline Watt, Jenny Hutton, Rebecca Neill, Rachel Nuttall, & Grace Renwick: Testing the implicit processing hypothesis of precognitive dream experience*
- 3:20 *Alejandro Parra: A phenomenological examination of premonition experiences: A survey study*
- 3:45pm ***Coffee break***
- Panel 1: Alterations of consciousness and Psi**
Chair: *Etzel Cardeña*
- 4:15pm Speaker 1: *Etzel Cardeña: Hypnosis, dissociation and Psi*
4:35pm Speaker 2: *David Luke: Psi and psychoactive substances*
5:00pm Speaker 3: *Serena M. Roney-Dougal: Meditation and Psi: Research review*
- 5:30pm **Poster session**
Michael Tremmel: Re-evaluating mental absorption in anomalous experiences: An information processing model of psi and its concomitants
Erika A. Pratte & Jacob W. Glazier: The Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology
Giorgio Cozzi: AISM: A 55 years old Italian Association devoted to parapsychology
- Evening events**
7:00pm ***Dinner***
- 8:30pm ***Presentation of the 2013 Parapsychological Association Awards, Alejandro Parra***
Moderator
Schmeidler Outstanding Student Award Winner: Glenn A. Hitchman, introduced by Alejandro Parra
Outstanding Career Award Winner: Eberhard W. Bauer, introduced by Massimo Biondi
Charles Honorton Integrative Contributions Award Winner: Etzel Cardeña, introduced by Alejandro Parra
Outstanding Contribution Award Winner: Patrizio E. Tressoldi, introduced by Massimo Biondi
- 9:00pm ***J.B. Rhine Address***
Introduction of Speaker, by *Alejandro Parra*
Simon Thorpe J.B. Rhine Address: Where does consciousness come from?
- Closing & Announcements for Sunday***

SUNDAY AUGUST 11TH, 2013

- 7:00am Continental breakfast
- Registration: Open 8:00am to 8:30am and during breaks
- 8:30am **Workshop 2: History of Parapsychology**
Chair: *Peter Mulacz*
- 8:30am *Renaud Evrard*: Pierre Janet and psychical research: The pioneer, the repentant, and the border-guard
- 8:45am *Everton de Oliveira Maraldi, Carlos S. Alvarado, Wellington Zangari, & Fatima Regina Machado*: A neglected pioneer? Théodore Flournoy's contributions to psychical research and parapsychology
- 9:00am *Adrian Parker*: Learning from historical cases: Madame D'Ésperance
- 9:15 am *Erlendur Haraldsson*: Indridi Indridason (1883-1912), the best documented Nordic medium
- 9:30am *Peter Mulacz*: Albert, Baron Schrenck-Notzing (1862-1929). Life and work
- 9:45am *Eberhard Bauer*: Fanny Moser and Sigmund Freud: Comments on psychical research and psychoanalysis in Germany
- 10:10am *Giulio Caratelli & Maria Luisa Felici*: Sándor Ferenczi: Experiences and "adventures" in the paranormal
- 10:30 **Coffee break**
- Panel 2: The contributions of Italian parapsychologists to international parapsychology**
Chair: *Alejandro Parra*
- 11:00am *Alejandro Parra*: Introduction
- 11:15am *Massimo Biondi*: Parapsychology in Italy: An overview
- 11:30am *Giulio Caratelli*: Three important Italian parapsychological personalities of the Forties and Fifties of the past century
- 11:45am *Ferdinando Bersani*: The Bologna Center for Parapsychological Studies (CSP): Research between 1970 and 1985
- 12:00am *Patrizio Tressoldi*: Theoretical and experimental contributions at the level of public and private institutions
- 12:30pm **Lunch break**
- 2:00pm **PA Business Meeting** moderated by Alejandro Parra and Annalisa Ventola
- 2:55pm **Closing Announcements and Acknowledgements**

ABSTRACTS

Full Papers

IS THE GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS PROJECT AN ESP EXPERIMENT?

Peter A. Bancel

Institut Métapsychique International, Paris, France
[pabancel@free.fr]

The Global Consciousness Project maintains a long-term experiment which tests the hypothesis that focused attention of large numbers of people during engaging world events will correlate with deviations in a global network of physical random number generators (RNGs). The Project proposes that the correlation is due to a global consciousness field that is sourced in an aspect of shared consciousness which becomes coherent at the time of major events and that the field perturbs the physical behavior of the RNGs. A 14-year replication experiment tests this hypothesis and finds that, during event periods, RNG deviations exceed null expectation by seven standard deviations. However, the formal experiment cannot distinguish between the GCP hypothesis and a hypothesis based on psi-mediated data selection. Thus, the most pressing question the Project faces is whether the experimental result is due to global consciousness or some form of ESP.

In this paper I present a model for the ESP hypothesis and develop a model of field consciousness. Seven statistical tests are derived to distinguish the models. All tests favor the field model. Five of the tests allow calculations of precise probability values. The combination of these tests yields a Z-score of 3.98 (P-value, 0.00003) against the selection model, indicating strongly that the GCP experiment measures a true PK effect and is not the result of psi-mediated data selection.

CAN PSI RESEARCH SPONSOR ITSELF? SIMULATIONS AND RESULTS OF AN AUTOMATED ARV-CASINO EXPERIMENT

Dick J. Bierman & Thomas Rabeyron

University of Amsterdam, Nantes University

[d.j.bierman@unamsterdam.nl - trabeyron@wanadoo.fr]

Simulations of a 32 trial ARV experiment with a roulette outcome determining the target suggest that, for viewers that perform with an effect size of around 0.35 and players using a simple betting strategy, there would be an average net result of about 10 times the starting capital. A review of ARV experiments yielding about 17 experiments for which trustworthy data could be obtained suggests that the mean scoring rate in a binary situation is around 63%. If these results could be confirmed this would falsify theories that predict that it is impossible to use psi in a consistent and robust way and moreover it could be the end of the financial problems in the field of psi research.

An automated ARV-casino system is described that reduces the administrative burden in running ARV experiments. The system has been used over the years in 120 trials with three different viewers of which at least one has performed in RV trials in the past with the required effect size. However, our results suggest a lower effect size of around 56% scoring rate.

The system automatically calculates the Local Sidereal Times for the moment the viewer does his/her prediction and also for the moment that the player bets on red or black. A categorization of these times according to LST periods that have been predictive in old RV and Ganzfeld trials shows that in contrast to earlier findings on free-response trials the period from 17:00-20:00 LST has the largest scoring percentage. None of the results are significant though.

RETRO-ACTIVE TRAINING OF RATIONAL VS. INTUITIVE THINKERS

Aron Bijl & Dick J. Bierman

University of Amsterdam

[d.j.bierman@unamsterdam.nl]

Retroactive effects were investigated in the context of a master's thesis on the effect of instruction on intuitive and rational thinkers in a Go-NoGo task. During the first phase of the task, subjects were instructed to respond to two randomly chosen symbols and to ignore two other symbols. In the second phase of the task, half of the subjects got the instruction to respond as quickly as possible (speed-instruction) while the other half got an instruction to avoid errors (accuracy-instruction). Major research questions of the project dealt with the effect of both instructions on task performance and the interaction of the type of instruction with the type of processing style (intuitive *vs.* rational). Results concerning these mainstream research questions have been reported elsewhere (Bijl, 2012).

In the second phase of the Go-NoGo task, only one symbol was to be responded on. This symbol was randomly chosen from the two that were used as stop-signals in the first phase. In accordance with the growing literature on retroactive influences on cognition and emotions, where future events seem to have an anomalous, retroactive influence on responses and behavior in the present, we predicted that the second task would have a practice effect on performance during the first task.

This prediction was confirmed. During the first session, the subjects responded significantly faster to the symbol they also had to react to in the second session, than to the symbol they only had to react to during the first session ($p = .038$). The subjects with an intuitive thinking style were totally responsible for the whole effect (intuitives alone: $p < 0.001$).

THE GOTHENBURG–KINGS COLLEGE TWIN RESEARCH: FINDINGS AND PROSPECTS

Göran Brusewitz & Adrian Parker

Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg

[goran.brusewitz@bredband.net - adrian.parker@psi.gu.se]

For the last two years, there has been collaborative research in Copenhagen, Gothenburg and London, involved in recruiting identical twins who report exceptional experiences of an apparent telepathic and synchronous nature. The studies have included the real time digital Ganzfeld, psychophysiological recordings, questionnaires, and postal survey interviews. Psychophysiological monitoring with one twin while the other experiences random startle stimuli, offers a standard methodology and has to date given promising results amongst those selected for further study. The need to select appropriate twins has led to the development of a standardized questionnaire, the Exceptional Experiences Questionnaire (EEQ). Responses to the EEQ by twins attending the twin day in London, indicated that about 60% of these twins reported exceptional experiences with about 11% reporting telepathic experiences to be a frequent occurrence in their life. Identical twins reported having these experiences significantly more often and had a significantly stronger attachment to each other than was the case for non-identical twins. Strong attachment was linked to the frequent reporting of more remarkable exceptional experiences. Most twins reported these experiences as having occurred in a waking state. Almost half of the twins reported the experience of telepathy concerning the bodily welfare of the other twin. However, in the postal survey group, about one-third of the remarkable events were positive events. The use of a private language and the occurrence of shared dreams seem to be further hallmarks of these experiences. The aim is to finally select a pool of twins with exceptional experiences whose experimental results will give a large effect size and findings that are not experimenter-dependent so that progress in this area can be facilitated.

SÁNDOR FERENCZI: EXPERIENCES AND “ADVENTURES” IN THE PARANORMAL

Giulio Caratelli & Maria Luisa Felici

Centro Interdisciplinare Ricerca Parapsicologica, Rome, Italy
[mluisa@tin.it]

Sándor Ferenczi (1873-1933), a Hungarian doctor, Freud's disciple and friend and a relation - without doubt very privileged with the father of psychoanalysis - met personally for the first time in 1908. This meeting has occupied a place of remarkable importance in the context of the psychoanalytical movement. Ferenczi's work is parallel with Freud's work, as aimed to divulgate the basic principles and doctrines and often enriched with his own original theoretical and clinical contributions - sometimes also in contrast with certain fundamental directives. In his works about the “active technique” among others, determined limits to the fundamental technique of “free association” and the use of specific instructions to give the patient are firmly wished; besides, Ferenczi was important in the development of the so-called “short psychotherapies.”

Ferenczi had a precocious attraction to some “mental” manifestations of mediumship, for the procedure of “automatic writing” and for some extraordinary phenomena - attraction moreover characterized by very interesting personal experiences - a clear interest that certainly comes many years before the meeting with Freud occurred in 1908. Ferenczi's attitude in this field, anyway, is always scientific, without “acts of faith” and without any kind of prejudice.

In this contribution, six sectors of Ferenczi's lasting parapsychological interests are pointed out, in which, among other things, he has been involved with personal experiences and direct investigations: (a) Early interests; (b) Further experiences with reputed “gifted” subjects; (c) A new context of experiences: paranormal phenomena during analysis; (d) The question of the so called “mathematical horses;” (e) Those experiences in the family; (f) Completion of the great work of stimulus.

Ferenczi has certainly played a role of great importance about the convictions and the first of Freud's personal investigations about the phenomena of “thought-transference,” particularly during the temporal interval included between the end of September, 1909 and the first days of 1911, exerting a strong influence that had brought Freud, even among much caution about the phenomena and constant fears of the future of the psychoanalytical movement, to the first and clear acknowledgments about the reality of the telepathic manifestations.

Also, the function of the stimulus precociously exerted by Ferenczi on István Hollós, a Hungarian psychoanalyst, too, concerning the telepathic phenomena that can occur during the analysis, has to be considered all the same precocious and of primary importance, bringing to the more and more progressive elucidation of the indispensable “psycho-dynamic” factors that form a causal “precondition” and bring to the occurrence of some genuine paranormal phenomena involving both the analyst and the patient.

Ferenczi, in great disagreement with Freud, had also been convinced of the possibility to know the future paranormally.

HOW TO HANDLE EXPECTATION BIAS IN PRESENTIMENT EXPERIMENTS: A RECOMMENDATION

Jan Dalkvist¹, Julia Mossbridge² and Joakim Westerlund³

¹*Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Sweden (emeritus)* - ²*Department of Psychology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA* - ³*Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Sweden*

[jandalkvist@gmail.com]

Here we reconsider expectation bias, with focus on how to handle it in experiments attempting to demonstrate presentiment. Presentiment is usually demonstrated by showing that significant physiological differences *precede* stimuli of different arousal levels, with all stimuli being presented in a randomized order with replacement. Often the direction of these differences suggests that physiological arousal is more likely to precede arousing rather than neutral stimuli. The possibility exists that such reactions can be explained as resulting from expectation bias. Expectation bias is based on the (false) notion that the likelihood of an arousing stimulus being presented grows as the number of consecutive calm stimuli increases (the gambler's fallacy). Different ways of minimizing or avoiding the bias are discussed.

On the basis of this discussion, our recommendation is to use analysis of variance (ANOVA) to separate the effect of the bias from the hypothetical presentiment effect, preferably at the trial-by-trial level. We also recommend ANOVA to be applied to each participant separately to avoid mixing within- and between- participant pre-stimulus effects, and to use a "counting" method to test for possible presentiment effects at the group level. The favored method is illustrated using both a simulated one-participant example and real, multi-participant data. Finally, we anticipate that ANOVA can be performed to handle not only the expectation bias, but also other similar biases, like the so-called "hot hand" bias, in presentiment experiments as well as in conscious precognition experiments involving feed-back.

FROM SYMPTOM TO DIFFERENCE: “HEARING VOICES” AS A PARADIGM FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE WITH EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Renaud Evrard

*Institut Métapsychique International; Center for Information, Research, and Counseling on
Exceptional Experiences, Paris, France*
[evrardrenaud@gmail.com]

Traditionally considered psychopathological auditory-verbal hallucinations, voices heard by patients, but also by many people from the general population, are currently the subject of much attention from researchers, clinicians and public authorities. One might think that voice-hearing is a psychopathological experience that has little to do with parapsychological phenomenology, except when information is ostensibly acquired paranormally under the form of a voice. But paranormal and spiritual interpretations of voices are ubiquitous in many studies of voice-hearing, and even are outstanding examples of salutogenic appraisals of psychotic-like experiences. The research on the type of appraisal along the axes of internal/external or personal/impersonal provides direct guidance on clinical intervention strategies. No longer focusing on the “what” but rather on the “how” of these experiences helps to avoid some biases relative to the assessment of beliefs - especially unusual beliefs - in the clinical setting.

In this paper, I first describe the genesis of the Hearing Voices Movement, as presented by the Dutch psychiatrist Marius Romme, and then selected research is reviewed on these anomalous experiences. I argue that parapsychology has much to learn from the Hearing Voices Movement, and *vice versa*. The change of perspective on voice-hearing - from a *symptom* to an individual *difference* - may be generalized for all exceptional experiences, as the late Rhea White had begun to establish with her Exceptional Human Experiences Network. This leads us to consider how parapsychological research is used by people searching for meaning due to their exceptional experiences, and conversely how researchers attempt to normalize these experiences. How to maintain a clinical approach of exceptional experiences when facing a discourse that disqualifies their psychopathological approach? As the figurehead of the broader movement of “recovery,” the Hearing Voices Movement offers a *competitive clinical practice*, but fails to provide a true *differential clinical practice*, starting from a neutral name-referring to several psychopathological pathways that need to be distinguished.

THE NATURE AND PHYLOGENETIC ORIGIN OF MIND

Antonio Giuditta

Department of Biological Sciences, "Federico II" University of Naples, Italy

[giuditta@unina.it]

According to current scientific views, mental activity is equivalent to brain activity, and brain activity is deemed to consist of processes occurring at the molecular, cellular and system levels. In fact, an implicit assumption of the current reductionist approach maintains that the ultimate foundation of biological capacities is placed at the molecular level, irrespective of the common notion that molecules are made of atoms, atoms of quarks and quarks of elementary particles. Since no objective threshold separates molecules from their lower components, and prevents atoms and subatomic particles to mold qualities of living organisms, that assumption lacks support.

The presumed reduction of mind to brain activity reflects the Cartesian view of the world adopted by science. It beholds the coexistence of a mental substance capable of thoughts (*res cogitans*) and a material substance extended in space (*res extensa*). Accordingly, the scientific observer perceives the outer world (which includes his living body) as made of matter, and is bound to describe and investigate it within a material paradigm. A disturbing consequence of this attitude implies that any physical brain event is supposed to coexist with its related mental event. Given the fully independent nature of mental and material substances, such coincidence is hard to envision.

The dual Cartesian view is not the only attempted description of the world. Monistic versions exist which profess unitary views, but they drastically differ in privileging the material or the mental substance as the only reality. Materialistic visions may acknowledge the existence of mental events, but segregate them in the virtual domain of epiphenomena, a subterfuge that does not provide a convincing explanation of their nature and minimizes their impact, notably those investigated by parapsychology. Conversely, spiritualistic visions emphasized by religions, philosophical systems, and some scientists maintain that mind (spirit, consciousness) is the only substance, and matter is what the subject perceives of the outer aspect of reality.

We recently came to a similar conclusion as a result of our attempt to investigate the mental qualities of living and inanimate objects using criteria based on the elementary features of human mind and their link to bodily structures. This survey has led us to the conclusion that mental aspects have been present throughout the 14 billion years of cosmic evolution which started with the appearance of elementary particles. This view opens novel perspectives to our attempts to envisage mind/body interactions, notably those investigated by parapsychology.

REMOTE VIEWERS CORRECTLY PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Debra Lynne Katz & Michelle Bulgatz
International School of Clairvoyance, Phelan, CA
[debrakatz@yahoo.com]

Researchers designed a project to determine whether 11 remote viewers, utilizing a double blind protocol, could describe a human subject in enough detail so raters could choose between 2 potential candidates in order to predict the outcome of the 2012 United States Presidential Election. Remote viewers utilize intuitive yet structured protocols to obtain information that lies outside their analytic mind or current knowledge base. Unlike other intuitive disciplines that focus on human subjects, these are the least utilized targets in remote viewing.

Researchers set out to answer: (1) How a project involving a human target differs from those utilizing objects and locations? (2) Is use of human targets in remote viewing related research projects or applied precognition projects involving binary outcomes something that researchers or project managers may want to consider? (3) Why are human subjects targets typically not utilized in formal RV research studies when they are quite often the main focus for intuitive practitioners? (4) Could a viewer's unconscious preference possibly impact their session?

Methodology: 11 remote viewers were tasked only with "The target is a person". Sessions were turned in one week prior to the election. Each word and sketch from each session was input into a spreadsheet, and compared to both candidates with the use of the Poquiz Rating System. After the election, viewers were informed that they had been tasked with viewing the elected candidate, President Obama. Later viewers were surveyed for their candidate preference. Once the scoring had been completed, the results were sent to Alexis Poquiz who calculated the percent that matched (Correct), did not match (Wrong) and that were Unknown for both candidates.

Findings: Out of 11 sessions, 8 matched Obama, and 3 matched Romney. The "Lower Q%" score also yielded an overall group prediction for Obama. The viewers' preference for a particular candidate was compared to their judged prediction. 7 out of 11 viewers indicated a preference towards a particular candidate. All 7 voiced a preference for the candidate that their session pointed to, including one whose session pointed towards the wrong candidate.

Conclusion: (1) Human targets may be more challenging to rate than location/object based targets due to inherent similarities between humans; viewer's subjective relational descriptors; and rater's personal biases perpetrated by competing media outlets and an inability to perceive a subject's inner life in the way a remote viewer can. (2) Humans as targets in remote viewing related research projects or applied precognition projects involving binary outcomes should not be considered unless only one photo in the set includes a human. (3) Poquiz's Rating Scale proved itself to be a superior rating tool. (4) Viewer preference may be as problematic as telepathic overlay in remote viewing research and projects. Utilizing a blind protocol does not and cannot control against this.

Lead Researchers/Project Managers: Debra Lynne Katz/Michelle Bulgatz

Analysts, Statistician, Analytic Tool Developer: Alexis Poquiz

Report Edited by: Jon Noble

Remote Viewers: Michelle Beltran, Jon Noble, Deborah Sherif, Laura Shelton, Paul Hennessy, Patsy Posey, Dolphin, David Beatty, Dan Hoffcaker, Jason Brown, Russ Evans

COMPETITION AND INHIBITION AMONG HEALING WAYS OF CHAKRA-ACTIVATING TYPE, DNA-REWRITING (LANGUAGE-LEADING) TYPE AND ENERGY-CIRCULATION- IMPROVING TYPE

Hideyuki Kokubo,^{1,2} Takako Usui,³ Choko Shimahara,⁴ Eri Minami,³
Takeshi Shimizu,² Osamu Takagi,¹ Kimiko Kawano,¹ & Mikio Yamamoto¹

¹*Institute of Living Body Measurements, International Research Institute, Chiba, Japan* - ²*Institute for Informatics of Consciousness, Meiji University, Tokyo, Japan* - ³*Yuria Psychology Support Office, Tokyo, Japan* - ⁴*California School of Professional Psychology, Tokyo, Japan*
[kokubo@a-iri.org]

The authors used their gas and fluorescence measurement methods (at four wavelengths) with cucumber pieces of *Cucumis sativus* “white spine type” as a bio-sensor and found three different patterns of responses of the bio-sensor to non-contact healing (bio-PK).

Purpose: Relationships among response patterns of the bio-sensor and healing ways were studied through principal component analysis (PCA).

Term and place: February 27 to March 30, and June 30 to August 5, 2012 at the International Research Institute.

Participants: Healers (2 males, 9 females; average age, 44.1 y) were recruited through a collaborator’s list, the internet and social network systems. Many healers used their own ways of healing.

Informed consent: Explanations of the study were given to the healers.

Measurement of healing power: Healing power was measured by gas and fluorescence measurement methods. J value, which is the natural logarithm of the ratio of gas concentrations (or intensities of fluorescence) of experiment and control samples, was used as an index of the magnitude of healing power. Measured J values were calibrated by the simultaneous calibration technique (SCAT), and calibrated J values were used for analyses. Healers were instructed to increase the gas of the cucumber samples. One trial was 30 minutes, and two trials were done a day. Healers did two or four trials.

Questionnaire: Questionnaire A consisted of 26 items (H-items) to survey healing ways which were used during the trials. Questionnaire B consisted of 26 items (CL-items) to survey client’s feeling and responses in usual situations.

Analyses: A combination of averages of gas and fluorescence J values was made per each trial. Next, their patterns were categorized by cluster analysis. PCA was done using J values and dummy parameters of Patterns, H-items and CL-items.

Result 1: Data combinations could be categorized into three patterns, labelled as I, II and III.

Result 2: Through PCA with H-items, three ways of healing were related to three patterns of the sensor’s response: (1) Chakra-activating type, (2) DNA-rewriting (language-leading) type, and (3) Energy-circulation-improving type. Moreover, there was a competition between types (1) and (2), and (2) was inhibited by (3).

Result 3: Through PCA with CL-items, when a bio-sensor showed Pattern I, a client is expected to indicate spiritual responses. When the bio-sensor showed Pattern II, physical changes are expected. When the bio-sensor showed Pattern III, physical changes and cleansing reactions are expected.

Discussion: In energy treatments, it is considered that there are many healing ways for which mechanisms or modes differ from each other. The healer is not necessarily aware of the differences in the healing ways. When a healer uses several healing ways in a clinical situation, there is a possibility that various factors act on a client synthetically; for example, different healing ways act on different parts; cells or tissues are activated by repeating of inhibition and strengthening effects. However, researchers should make an effort to limit of the kinds of healing ways if they attempt to study the details of mechanisms of healing. CL item 08 was not considered as a good question. Fluorescence measurement method should be improved in accuracy. In the present study, use of J value was effective and also analyses, which are based on pattern analyses of sensor's responses, were effective.

Conclusion: There were three healing ways, and they were competitive or inhibitive. These findings were obtained through pattern analysis of multivariate data sets using J value. This strategy is useful to study the mechanism of bio-PK.

EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION, DISSOCIATION, AND MOTOR AUTOMATISMS

John Palmer

Rhine Research Center, Durham, NC, USA

[john@rhine.org]

Eighty participants completed an ESP task modelled on the Ouija Board. The board was a computer writing tablet on which was affixed a 16-square grid conceptually dividable into four quadrants, with a number 1 to 4 in each square. There were three target designations: square ($p = 1/16$), quadrant ($p = 1/4$), and number ($p = 1/4$). The main dependent variable was "location hits," an unweighted composite of square and quadrant hits. For each of the 36 trials, participants were instructed to explore the surface of the grid with the computer pen and indicate their response by stopping for 1 sec. Beforehand, at home, participants completed Watson's Dissociative Processes Scale, which contains three subscales: Obliviousness, Imagination, and Detachment.

Participants were randomly assigned to four cells in a 2x2 factorial design. Independent variables were hand used to move the pen [Hand: right (R) vs. left (L)] and additional procedures applied during the ESP task to facilitate dissociation (Method). For one of these (Eyes-closed: E), participants were instructed to keep their eyes closed and blank the mind as much as possible. For the other (Quotations: Q), the intent was to distract the conscious mind by having participants read quotations that appeared in succession on a computer screen. An examination of record sheets containing only response sequences and corresponding reaction times indicated that on some trials many participants jiggled the pen, causing registration of an unintended response. This caused adjustments to be made to the ESP scores of 40 participants and the dropping of 9 others. An ANOVA of the 2x2 design yielded a significant Method by Hand interaction, with significant psi-hitting in the combined ER, EL, and QR conditions (EQR) and significant psi-missing in the QL condition, attributed to frustration to the high task difficulty in this condition.

The prediction of superior performance with the left hand was not confirmed. The other hypotheses were tested using location hits in the EQR condition. As predicted, participants who reported experiencing their hand being moved by an outside force for any amount of time during the ESP task scored significantly higher than other participants. In a similar experiment by the author using a board more similar to the Ouija Board, strong psi-hitting was found among participants claiming the outside-force effect but only 1 to 40% of the time. The present result was considered a replication of the previous one because of a plausible reinterpretation of the earlier finding. Positive responses to the outside-force question were predicted by DPS Detachment. Significant positive correlations were found between location hits and DPS Imagination and Detachment. In both cases, the effects had been predicted for Obliviousness. All DPS subscales positively predicted number hits in the QL condition.

The data were interpreted as reflecting the operation of two distinct processes mediating different trials in the ESP run: (a) a (primarily) motor process restricted to location hits the EQR condition and (b) a (purely) cognition process operative for location and number hits across all conditions.

THE COST OF BEING DIFFERENT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARANORMAL EXPERIENCES AND POSITIVE/NEGATIVE SCHIZOTYPY

Alejandro Parra

Department of Psychology, Universidad Abierta Interamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina
[rapp@fibertel.com.ar]

The present study investigated how subjective paranormal experiences relate to positive and negative schizotypy. It was hypothesized that paranormal experiences correlate with schizotypy proneness, schizotypy sub-factor Unusual Experiences, and positive schizotypy. Undergraduate students, family members and friends, 57% females and 42.2% males (Mean age = 33 years), filled two questionnaires: the *Oxford–Liverpool Inventory of Feelings and Experiences* – which assesses schizotypy in four dimensions – and the *Paranormal Experiences Questionnaire*, which collects information on spontaneous paranormal experiences. Participants with experiences were both less cognitively disorganised and reported subjectively more pleasant paranormal experiences, were less impulsive, more social, and displayed less eccentric forms of behaviour, which often suggests a lack of self-control. The majority of paranormal experiences were related with positive schizotypy scores. It is noteworthy that, in an inverse direction, some paranormal experiences are also related with negative schizotypy. In conclusion, the present study implicates an interaction between schizotypal personality factors in predicting the subjective quality of odd experiences. Consistent with previous research, results indicate a potentially adaptive, and indeed protective, role for paranormal beliefs/magical thinking.

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF PREMONITION EXPERIENCES: A SURVEY STUDY

Alejandro Parra

Department of Psychology, Universidad Abierta Interamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina
[rapp@fibertel.com.ar]

A premonition is defined as a feeling or impression that something is about to happen, yet about which no normal explanation is available. The main aim in carrying out this survey was to estimate the proportion of people who claim to have had various kinds of premonition experiences, and to explore correlations between these experiences and other variables, such as content, symbols, clearness, vividness, emotional intensity, the ability to discern paranormal/normal explanations, time range, the people involved, states of consciousness, and gender differences.

Two groups were surveyed, 255 participants (mean age = 30.75) interested in paranormal topics and 429 undergraduate students (mean age = 33.97) as a “control” group. Overall, 233 participants of the paranormal group (90.7%) and 21.7% of the nonparanormal group reported having experienced premonitions in dreams, and 99.2% of people interested in the paranormal and 51.7% of students reported having experienced premonitions not related to dreams (hunches or other events). For premonitions in dreams, the paranormal group reported having experienced serious events, very real events that take place as they dreamed them, and the people involved were acquaintances. For the nonparanormal group, the content of the dreams were trivial events, and the people involved in the dreams were relatives. They also tended to be higher on clearness and vividness but lower emotional intensity than the nonparanormal group.

The nonparanormal group, who had both premonitions in dreams and premonitions not related to dreams, tended to experience lower clearness in relation to negative emotions. For premonitions not related to dreams, the paranormal group reported having experienced serious events, and the people involved were acquaintances. The nonparanormal group reported having experienced trivial events. For the paranormal group, males, serious events, and acquaintances, and unknown scored higher than the nonparanormal group. The paranormal group also scored higher on clearness, emotional intensity, and vividness than the nonparanormal group. The paranormal group scored higher in assaults/robberies, major accidents, events related to unknown ones, and events reported in the media than the nonparanormal group. The paranormal group also scored higher on negative emotions. The paranormal group reported having experienced a number of other premonition experiences, mainly having the experience of anticipating what another person in the conversation was about to say, having a vision of a situation, or having an experience of a sudden feeling of a future event. For the paranormal group, states of consciousness and other premonitional experiences were highly correlated. Participants who reported other premonitional experiences correlated mainly with awake state, meditating and falling asleep or awakening.

PSI AND DEATH OF THE PERSON-TARGET: AN EXPERIMENT WITH HIGHLY EMOTIONAL ICONIC REPRESENTATIONS

Alejandro Parra & Juan Carlos Argibay

Department of Psychology, Universidad Abierta Interamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina
[rapp@fibertel.com.ar]

A number of psychics have gained a reputation as psychic detectives using such clues as photographs, a town map, or a piece of clothing. In fact, dowsing has long been espoused as a technique for helping individuals to utilize untrained psi abilities, in terms of unconscious muscular movements, while the pendulum acts as an amplifier of subconscious ideomotor movements. The aim of this study was to compare mental and motor conditions using images of dead people as targets. In one iteration, photographs were used of the person-targets in order to determine if the participants scored differently when using mental or motor procedures. In another, the same approach used highly emotional iconic representations, that is, images of people who had committed suicide.

The sample consisted of 214 female and male participants (mean age = 43.84; $SD = 13.40$) who had reported personal experiences suggestive of psi. Four trials were performed for the “mental” (psychometry) procedures and four for the “motor” (pendulum) procedures. After a number of security measures, including randomized procedures and control groups, the results showed that the “mental” (psychometry) condition scored significantly above chance ($MCE = 2$; mean mental = 2.39, $t = 4.55$; $p < .001$), and also scored significantly higher than the “motor” condition ($p = .004$). In the second group of trials, the results also showed that the “mental” condition scored significantly above chance (Mean Mental = 2.14, $t = 1.44$; $p .075$); however, in this group, the “mental” condition did not score significantly higher than the “motor” condition.

We conclude that the study offers support for the claim that iconic representation through psychometry is psi conducive. However, in the second analysis, one tentative interpretation would be that the psi information was blocked by some psychological defense mechanism in response to an unpleasant association with the stimulus.

FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL GEOMAGNETIC ACTIVITY AND PSYCHIC AWARENESS

Serena M. Roney-Dougal,¹ Adrian Ryan² & David Luke³

¹*Psi Research Centre, Glastonbury, Britain* - ²*Twickenham, Britain* - ³*Dept. of Psychology & Counselling, University of Greenwich, London, Britain*
[serenard1@yahoo.co.uk]

For the past three decades, research in parapsychology has found evidence that psychic experiences are related to fluctuations in the Earth's magnetic field; these fluctuations are termed geomagnetic activity (GMA). This research, however, exhibits an anomaly: in some studies psi is related to higher GMA and in some with lower GMA. Most research has used global measures of GMA, and it has been suggested that this anomaly may be clarified by studying local, high time-resolution, measurements of the geomagnetic field.

In order to explore this possibility, a four-year investigation has been conducted with long-term meditators. In the preliminary study from 2008-2010, throughout the whole period of experimentation, solar activity, and consequently GMA, was at the lowest level seen for 100 years. The psi data collected did, however, exhibit seasonal effects similar to those found by Sturrock and Spottiswoode in their 2007 paper.

For this follow-up study the experimental design was identical to that in the preliminary study. After a 15-minute meditation period, the participant attempted to identify a "target," which was a pseudo-randomly selected video clip. The computer programme (PreCOG) chose a target set at random from a pool of 25 sets, and a target video clip at random from the four-clip set. PreCOG also pseudo-randomly selected whether the target would be chosen before the participant saw the set (clairvoyance), or after (precognition). Each participant completed a minimum of eight sessions (trials) each year. There were 22 participants, all meditators residing at Kagyu Samye Ling Tibetan center or in the nearby village, who had practiced meditation for at least ten years.

Three questionnaires and one psychological test were completed: the Meditation Attainment Questionnaire (MAQ) is a measure of the level of meditation attainment achieved; the Freiburg mindfulness questionnaire (FMI) assesses the level of mindfulness attained; the Necker cube test is a measure of focus of attention; and the Temporal Lobe Epilepsy (TLE) questionnaire assesses temporal lobe lability, which may indicate both a participant's propensity for psi-type experiences and the degree to which the person is affected by GMA. The meditation and psychological data will be presented in a separate paper.

Geomagnetic field measurements were supplied by the British Geological Survey's Eskdalemuir observatory, which is located two miles from Samye Ling.

There were two formal hypotheses: (1) Psi scoring for sessions conducted during periods with high band 3 (0.025-0.1 Hz) GMA would be lower than during low band 3 GMA. (2) Psi scoring for sessions conducted during high band 1 (0.2-0.5 Hz) GMA would be higher than during low band 1 GMA.

Results for both the preliminary and follow-up studies combined were: Levels of GMA were at their lowest for 100 years, and lower than the normal minimum level. This was totally unexpected and prevented the planned analyses to explore psi scoring across a range of conditions. By the pre-planned analysis, there was no significant difference between sessions conducted during periods with high or low band 3 activity. But with a post-hoc analysis using a lower high/low threshold, psi

scoring was significantly lower at high levels of band 3 GMA ($p = .03$, 2-tailed); in a separate analysis scoring was also significantly higher during periods of very low GMA ($p = .01$, 2-tailed). There was no enhancement of psi scoring during periods of high band 1 activity, possibly due to the extremely low GMA.

Overall, males scored significantly negatively (mean psi score = -0.15, $p = .02$, 2-tailed), whereas females scored at chance levels (mean psi score = 0.02); the difference was significant ($p = .03$). An exploratory hypothesis that the participants responding most strongly to GMA would be those with the highest scores on the TLE questionnaire was marginally significant ($p = .06$). But this was primarily due to one outlier and was only observed in precognition sessions, and so should be treated with caution. A second exploratory hypothesis postulating a link between seasonal effects and psi scoring was not significant, but did show a correlation with previous research.

THE NATURE OF PRECOGNITION

Jon Taylor

Puertomar 11-5-D, Valdelagrana, Puerto de Santa María, Cádiz, Spain

[rjontaylor@hotmail.com]

This paper describes a theory explaining precognition as a connection with the percipient's brain in the future - a link with his or her future experience of the event. The theory considers precognition to be the fundamental phenomenon of ESP.

The meta-analyses performed on the results of precognition experiments give outstanding evidence for contacts with events that actually occur in the future. This suggests that the future events must "already exist" in some sense, and it conforms to a block universe model in which past and future events already exist in the space-time continuum, in accordance with the special theory of relativity. However, this conflicts with the orthodox interpretation of quantum mechanics, according to which the outcome of a quantum process is probabilistic, so that it would be impossible to know the nature of the outcome until *after* that outcome has been produced. Nonetheless, some modern interpretations do conform to the concept of a determined universe. David Bohm proposes the existence of an implicate order which extends throughout all space and all time, and out of which the successive "slices" of space-time are unfolded to form the block universe. Bohm suggests that similar structures "resonate" in the implicate order, with the result that they are unfolded in a form in which they are more closely similar to one another. This would enable information to be transferred without requiring a "transmission" of information through time.

The principles are applied to the neuronal spatiotemporal patterns that are activated in the brain. For example, a precognition would occur when the pattern activated at the time of the future experience of an event resonates with any similar pattern that is (spontaneously) activated in the present. This might enable the activation of the present pattern to be sustained until the threshold is reached at which it produces the conscious awareness of an event similar to the event that will be experienced in the future. Thus, precognition is explained as a transfer of information from the brain in the future to the brain in the present. Telepathy could similarly be explained as a transfer between different brains. However, telepathic contacts may be extremely difficult to obtain, on account of the differences between the neuronal patterns involved. Furthermore, the possibility of clairvoyant contacts being made directly with an inanimate object or event is eliminated, because of the dissimilarity between the object and the pattern activated in the brain.

The structural replication tendencies responsible for the information transfer refer to *processes* that occur in the environment. These processes are represented in the brain by processes in which the neuronal networks are connected together (by association) to form spatiotemporal patterns of activation. A precognition refers to the information contained in the association between a pair of networks. For example, in the case of an event caused by the percipient, the networks may refer to the percipient "doing something to cause the event". Thus, if a percipient intends to cause an event in the present, and he does cause the event in the future, a resonance occurs, and he may precognize the fact that he will successfully fulfil the intention. However, if he is unable to cause the event to occur in the future, a resonance does not occur, and the absence of a resonance may serve as an *intuitive warning*, indicating that something will prevent him from fulfilling the

intention. This enables him to decide to do something else, without a risk of confronting the intervention paradox.

The mechanism is applied to the target-guessing experiments in precognition. The participant intends for his selection of a given target option to cause the effect of “scoring a hit”. In the case of an incorrect selection, there is no resonance and an intuitive warning is produced. The percipient unconsciously moves on to another option. When he comes to the correct option, a resonance occurs and he registers the option. That is because his future experience will be one in which he does associate the option with the knowledge of scoring a hit, when he receives feedback of the target information. In a free-response experiment, the participant may have to identify a combination of target elements that he can associate with “producing a successful result”, in this case when feedback of the result is given. The mechanism suggests some important conclusions concerning the nature of the precognitive contact:

1. *Precognition is the fundamental phenomenon of ESP.* Telepathic contacts would seem unlikely to be detected in the laboratory; the results of telepathy and clairvoyant experiments are explained in terms of precognitive contacts with the participant’s future knowledge of the target information. This means that feedback about the target (or about the result of the experiment) must be given to the participant in the future. Replication problems may have occurred when this was not done. By giving feedback, it enables the participant to collect and encode the target information *via* his ordinary senses. Selectivity is obtained because the information refers to the actual target, and the participant does not have the task of trying to distinguish between the target and the “decoys”.

2. *A precognition is more likely to occur when the experience of the event in the future produces a stronger emotional impact.* If the future experience corresponds to an “emotional” event, the degree of activation of the pathways through the networks is increased. This produces a stronger resonance which is more likely to have influenced the networks activated in the present. For example, the pre-stimulus response experiments detect an “emotional” stimulus given to the participant in the future, but not a “calm” stimulus. The target-guessing experiments detect the participant’s future emotional experience of “scoring a hit”. When the participant becomes bored with the experiment, the future experience no longer produces an emotional impact and the results fall closer to chance expectation (i.e. the decline effect).

3. *A precognition is more likely to occur when the time-interval up to the moment of the future experience is shorter.* The synapses forming the present and future patterns of activation are subject to constant changes due to brain plasticity. Closer matching and a stronger resonance are therefore to be expected when the *precognitive interval* is shorter. A meta-analysis shows that the results are highly significant for precognitive intervals of a few hundred milliseconds, and they fall to non-significance only when the interval is increased to more than one month.

4. *The results of an experiment go in the direction of the percipient’s “belief” towards obtaining those results.* This is the well-known sheep-goat effect, in which a believer in ESP scores above chance, whereas a non-believer scores below chance. That is because the non-believer makes intuitive decisions to try to select the target options which lead to the future experience of scoring “misses”. He therefore produces a larger proportion of misses, and the number of hits falls to below chance expectation.

5. *The results of REG experiments may be due to precognition, and not to PK.* Experiments have been performed in which REG outputs are ostensibly influenced in accordance with the operator’s conscious intention. However, the results can be explained in terms of intuitive

decisions to achieve an optimum sampling of the data stream, in accordance with Edwin May's data augmentation theory. This would tend to refute the observational theories which have been used to support the clairvoyant interpretation of the target-guessing experiments, because they suggest that the participant's consciousness might be able to collapse the wave-function of the target to the state that is reported.

The predictions of the theory are subject to testing, and they suggest that a new approach may have to be taken in the design of ESP experiments if better repeatability is to be expected in the future.

TESTING THE IMPLICIT PROCESSING HYPOTHESIS OF PRECOGNITIVE DREAM EXPERIENCE

Milan Valášek,^{*} Caroline Watt,[#] Jenny Hutton, Rebecca Neill, Rachel Nuttall, &
Grace Renwick

Department of Psychology, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
[mvalasek@staffmail.ed.ac.uk]

It has been proposed that experiences of putatively precognitive dreams might be a result of a person's picking up on subtle environmental cues without being aware of it and having an implicit inference based on these cues manifest itself in the person's dreams. Here we present two studies exploring the predictions of the implicit processing hypothesis of precognitive dream experience.

Study 1 investigated the relationship between implicit learning ability, transliminality, and precognitive dream belief and experience. Participants completed the Serial Reaction Time task, a widely-used method of assessing implicit learning, and a battery of items. We predicted a positive relationship between the variables. However, this prediction was not supported.

Study 2 tested the hypothesis that in the absence of a relationship between implicit processing and precognitive dream belief and experience, a difference in the ability to notice subtle cues explicitly might account for these beliefs and experiences. Participants completed a modified version of the flicker paradigm used in change blindness research. Their task was to detect a change in two stimuli presented in quick succession. If they failed to do so, they were asked to indicate a change or lack thereof using their "gut feeling." We predicted a negative relationship between the ability to explicitly detect changes and reported precognitive dream belief and experience. This relationship was not found in the data. There was also no relationship between precognitive dream belief and experience and performance on the "gut feeling" trials, thus further supporting the findings of Study 1.

Results and limitations are discussed and potential alternative implications of the implicit processing hypothesis for future research are identified.

^{*} Correspondence to Milan Valášek, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh, 7 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JZ, UK. M Valášek is partly supported by the Parapsychological Association Research Endowment.

[#] Perrott-Warrick Senior Researcher, Koestler Parapsychology Unit. We are grateful to the Perrott-Warrick Fund, which has made this research possible.

THE SHAREFIELD: A NOVEL APPROACH FOR FORCED-CHOICE GESP RESEARCH

Mario P. Varvoglis,^{*} Peter Bancel, Djohar si Ahmed, Jean-Paul Bailly, & Céline Béguian
Institut Métapsychique International, Paris, France
[contact@mariovarvoglis.com]

While the Ganzfeld paradigm is still among the most reliable protocols in free-response GESP research, it is in our field's long term interest to continue to explore alternative approaches that are more efficient in terms of data-collection rates. Both the Ganzfeld and other free-response protocols involving noise reduction procedures, are time- and resource-intensive experimental approaches. Despite their respectable effect size, they are not well-suited for process oriented research - especially in a field of limited resources. This may account for the fact that an abundance of non-standard Ganzfeld studies, that do not adhere closely to the original protocol, have emerged in the past few decades. It is argued here that a plausible alternative to the free-response/noise-reduction approach would be one using noise-reduction-or optimization-procedures in a forced-choice context.

As shown by a recent meta-analysis, forced-choice studies, while yielding lower effect sizes, have produced positive results over the course of 70 years. While the trial effect sizes associated with this research is clearly inferior to that of free-response studies, the data collection rate is far higher, and replication rates are still adequate for process-oriented research. Above all, as argued in the present paper, a systematic introduction of participant optimization procedures may considerably improve forced-choice effect sizes. We thus present a novel approach for combining forced-choice protocols and participant optimization procedures, within an automated testing framework. A first study exploring this approach is reported, involving a dyadic-ESP or telepathy protocol named the Sharefield. We outline here some of its most salient characteristics.

No mentation, multiple trials: Unlike free-response approaches, individual trials are short, and involve no mentation period; a full experimental trial, including judging, is completed in two minutes. This allows for multiple trials during a 45-minute experimental session.

An immersive environment: Both participants wear an audiovisual head-mounted display (HMD) which immerses them in a slowly animated starfield and meditative soundtrack. This audiovisual background is present across trials, and across the different phases of each trial (instructions, sending/receiving and judging).

Symmetric participant roles. Participants alternate sender/receiver roles on a trial-by-trial basis; at the beginning of each trial, the software announces the participant's role on his/her screen and accordingly launches either sender or receiver tasks.

Simplified judging task and target sets. Compared to typical free-response studies, the participant's judging task here is relatively simple. Essentially, the percipient's ESP task is to sense whether the agent is experiencing a visually complex and stimulating photograph (randomly selected from an image pool) or a relatively neutral gray form, that remains the same throughout.

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A training process and baseline condition. Participants in a Sharefield session find themselves in a cognitively complex situation—involving multiple trials, alternating sender/receiver roles, and multiple phases within each trial (sending/receiving, judging, feedback, and inter-trial breaks). Furthermore, given the fully automated protocol, they go through the session without any guidance from the experimenter, while potentially in an altered state of consciousness. To better prepare them for all this, we decided to have participants first go through a training session that would familiarize them with the ESP tasks and phases of the protocol. We also conceived this training session as a way to collect data on participants' "baseline" psi performance, which could then be compared to their psi results under the optimization conditions. Thus, the participant pair first went through a 10-minute Non Optimized Experience (NOE) session, that involved the basic ESP task (with alternating sender-receiver roles, judging, feedback etc.), but no relaxation, immersive audiovisual displays, or HMD system (a standard computer monitor was used instead). They then went through a 45 minute Optimization Experience (OE) in which the monitor was replaced by the HMD, and the ESP tasks situated within relaxation suggestions and the immersive audiovisual environment.

We report here the results of the first Sharefield study. Its principal objective was to empirically assess the viability of the overall approach, and thus contribute to the development of future protocols. Nevertheless, we did formulate three formal hypotheses for this experiment: (I) the trial effect size for the OE condition would be statistically significant; (II) the trial effect size for the OE condition would be significantly superior to the NOE effect size; (III) the OE session effect size would be significantly superior to that established for the Ganzfeld.

Twenty-five participant-pairs (50 participants) were run in the laboratory of the Institut Métapsychique International (IMI). Prior to arrival, each completed online versions of two questionnaires: the Big Five Inventory, measuring 5 personality dimensions (Extraversion; Agreeableness; Conscientiousness; Neuroticism and Openness to Experience); and a questionnaire concerning participants' attitudes and experiences as related to psi phenomena, mental disciplines, and dreams and absorptive states. Upon arrival at the IMI, and following introductory procedures, participants were first run through the NOE session; then, following a brief pause, they went through the OE session. Finally, a half hour debrief allowed us to collect qualitative participant impressions concerning their experience of the Sharefield.

None of the three hypotheses were confirmed to a significant degree, though a near-significant trend was shown for Hypothesis II. Post-hoc analyses did produce some suggestive evidence that, in the OE condition, the null averaged trial results may have been due to high variability in scoring (i.e. hitting and missing), rather than a total absence of psi. In particular, we focused on three factors known to impact effect sizes in psi tasks (target quality, subject ability and position effects) and, for each of these, applied two tests assessing scoring variability. We obtained statistically significant results in two of the six tests; by contrast, applying the identical test matrix to the NOE condition yielded no significant results. For the hit rate variability tests in the OE condition, we ran a Monte Carlo simulation to estimate the probability of finding 2 out of any of the 6 tests with P-values of 0.03 and 0.02, or less. The simulation yields a significant overall p-value of $p = .012$.

Post-session debriefings with participants allowed us to establish potential problems with the protocol, at least from an experiential perspective. In particular, over half the subjects reported considerable physical discomfort with the HMD system, and found the trial-by-trial hit/miss feedback stressful and distracting.

These quantitative and qualitative data will be quite useful in terms of our long-term objective, which is to develop a viable tool for process-oriented psi research. Our modular software approach

facilitates implementation of protocol improvements (e.g., with respect to the judging and feedback procedures). More generally, the software allows the creation of protocols addressing a range of research issues. In this context we intend to quickly develop single-subject versions of the software, geared toward clairvoyance or precognition protocols.

Above all, we are encouraged by the successful use of optimization procedures and multiple-trial psi tasks within an automated protocol. The optimization procedures fluidly integrated into all stages of the experimental trials, and participants' reports during debriefings suggest that the relatively sustained rhythm of 20 trials/session did not perturb their experience of the OE. Indeed, nearly all under-estimated the duration of their sessions (a sign that they found the experience engaging rather than tedious) and a clear majority expressed interest in returning for more sessions. This suggests that the general approach is sound, and has potential as a long-term tool for process-oriented research.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN PRECOGNITIVE DREAM EXPERIENCES: THE ROLE OF PARANORMAL BELIEF, SELECTIVE RECALL AND PROPENSITY TO FIND CORRESPONDENCES

Caroline Watt,^{*} Natalie Ashley, Jack Gillett, Megan Halewood, & Rebecca Hanson
Department of Psychology, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
[caroline.watt@ed.ac.uk]

We report two studies into psychological factors that have been proposed to contribute to the experience of having had a precognitive dream.

Study 1 investigated the role of selective recall in precognitive dream experiences. Participants read two diaries, one purporting to be a dream diary, and one purporting to be a diary of events in the dreamer's life. The events either confirmed or disconfirmed the reported dreams. After undertaking a distractor task, participants were given a recall test. As predicted, a significantly greater number of confirmed than disconfirmed dream-event pairs were recalled. Study 1 also investigated whether paranormal belief moderated the selective recall effect, but no relationship was found.

Study 2 investigated the hypothesis that paranormal beliefs may in part arise from a propensity to associate unrelated events. Participants undertook two tasks, one "contextual" that was designed to simulate precognitive dream experiences where dreams and events are seen to coincide, and one "neutral." For the contextual task, participants were asked to find correspondences between randomly-paired world news articles taken from a public broadcaster's online archive, and dream reports taken from an online dreambank. The neutral associations task invited participants to produce a noun that would provide an associative connection between two unrelated nouns. As predicted, paranormal belief and precognitive dream belief were found to correlate significantly with ability to find correspondences between the dreams and news event pairs. Contrary to prediction, no relationship was found between belief and performance on the neutral association task.

Together, these studies illustrate the operation of mechanisms that, when present in individuals having dreams and experiencing subsequent events, would tend to lead to an increase in the number of experiences of a seeming coincidence between dreams and events that can be interpreted as precognitive.

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ABSTRACTS

Research Briefs

A SIMPLE METHOD TO QUANTITATIVELY DETERMINE HUMAN BIOENERGETIC FIELDS

Antonio Giuditta

Department of Biological Sciences, "Federico II" University of Naples, Italy
[giuditta@unina.it]

The human capacity to move distant objects (telekinesis) was investigated in the last two centuries in talented people such as Palladino and Home. In addition, more than 100 people expressed micro-telekinetic abilities in experiments at Princeton University (Dunne and Jahn, *Cell. Mol. Biol.* 2005; 51: 703-714), thus suggesting their wide occurrence. The identification of these capacities is, however, hindered by the lack of a simple method of analysis. Such a regrettable condition became evident at the end of last year when we were asked to examine the telekinetic capacities of a middle-aged man.

Instead of objects he brought with him and hanged on a fixed support by thin nylon threads, we preferred to monitor the rotation of a light plastic dish (diameter 21 cm) suspended upside down from its balancing centre by a nylon thread (0.14 mm, 30 cm long). Marks on the dish circumference indicating its position in degrees (from 0° to 360°) allowed assessment of direction, amplitude and velocity. Movements were camera recorded, transferred to a computer, and dish position was read every 15-30 seconds.

This protocol was adopted to investigate the capacities of 12 students and teachers (10 individuals plus one couple of girls). Sessions included three, five minute periods in which subject and experimenter sat at about two meters from the dish. In the control period, subjects were asked to avoid thinking about moving the dish, but they tried to rotate it in the following experimental period. They were also asked to concentrate on a stressing experience in the last period. Unexpectedly, all subjects were able to rotate the dish in the control period. Maximal velocity (V_{\max}) and amplitude (A_{\max}) were highly variable. To our additional surprise, intensity of movements tended to decrease during the experimental period, and movements were generally not increased in the stress period.

Air turbulence was not involved. Firstly, dish pitching and rolling that are readily elicited by it were never observed. In addition, room's window and door were closed, no people entered the room, and heating devices were never in use. Finally, air turbulence was excluded by the occurrence of dish rotations even when a thick plastic curtain surrounded the test system.

The unexpected rotations occurring in the control periods raised the problem of no-subject controls. Accordingly, experiments included an initial no-subject 10 minute period and a following 10 minute period in which the subject attempted to rotate the dish. Rotations were present in the no-subject period mostly in the first minutes, but their intensity increased up to ten times with some subjects. The origin of no-subject rotations is under investigation, but air turbulence or building vibrations appear unlikely. More likely sources may be the operator's intentions and the mind states of nearby people.

The protocol recommends itself as a simple quantitative way to investigate telekinetic capacities with special regard to states of mind possibly modulating them.

ANALYSIS OF EVERYDAY MIND-MATTER INTERACTION NARRATIVES USING THE DESCRIPTIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

Jacob W. Glazier
University of West Georgia
[jacob.w.glazier@gmail.com]

By examining psi phenomena from a qualitative perspective, instead of through experimentation, researchers can better understand the contextual, relational, and subjective experience of said phenomena (Braude, 1997). In regards to mind-matter interaction (MMI), only one qualitative study has employed the descriptive phenomenological method (Heath, 2000), which used participants with previously experienced mind-matter interaction. As a result, the present study examines, through the descriptive phenomenology method, everyday, lived MMI experiences as they occur in the real world. The analysis reveals 8 constituents which are irreducible to the everyday MMI experience and, yet, interrelate. The constituents are: 1. Intense feelings of fear or anger; 2. Proneness to transitory states of consciousness; 3. Accompaniment of other anomalous experiences; 4. Struggle to make sense of experience; 5. Presence of strange electrical-energy interference or unexplainable manipulation; 6. Physical proximity; 7. Feeling initial surprise or disbelief; 8. Feelings of little to no control over effect. This manuscript illuminates the nuances of these constituents and how the analysis might contribute to the literature regarding psychokinesis.

A BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH TO CREATIVE DISSOCIATION: REMARKS ON A CASE OF MEDIUMISTIC PAINTING

Everton de Oliveira Maraldi¹ & Stanley Krippner²

¹University of São Paulo, Brazil - ²Saybrook University, San Francisco, USA
[evertonom@usp.br]

A category of religious experience that still preserves much of the original blurring and fusion between art and religion is mediumistic or spirit painting. Performed by spiritualist mediums in different locations around the world, this form of religious experience is characterized by the supposed ability of an individual to serve as an instrument for deceased artists to continue to perform their works. In the manner of so-called automatic writing, mediums try to reproduce aspects of the style of deceased painters, in order to demonstrate their identity and survival of bodily death. Little scientific research has been conducted concerning this topic. We present a brief analysis of painting activity performed by Jacques Andrade, a Brazilian medium.

Born in 1945, Andrade, who has been active in the Brazilian Kardecist movement for many years, has dedicated most of his religious life to mediumistic painting at his center (The Leonardo da Vinci Salon of Mediumistic Art). Data about the medium were collected on several different occasions, from 1998 to 2013, and include psychophysiological measures (hand temperature, heart rate, bilateral skin conductance, muscle tension, and electrical brain activity), psychological measures (Dissociative Experiences Scale, Tellegen Absorption Scale, Revised Transliminality Scale, and Childhood Trauma Questionnaire), artistic material, observational data (photographs of paintings, observations of the medium in action), and some basic socio-demographic and biographical information. Basically we sought to evaluate: (a) general aspects of the painting technique and style employed by the medium, (b) the main features of his pictorial production, and (c) the general behavior shown by the medium during the mediumistic activity.

In an effort to combine and integrate our findings about this case, we propose a biopsychosocial approach to the study of what might be called creative dissociation.

SPONTANEOUS ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES: INVESTIGATING PSYCHOSOCIAL DIMENSIONS AND SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATIONS FOR EXOTIC SUPERNATURAL/ TECHNOLOGICAL CASES IN BRAZIL

Leonardo Breno Martins¹ & Wellington Zangari²

¹Laboratory of Anomalistic Psychology, Institute of Psychology - ²Psychosocial Processes (Inter Psi) Institute of Psychology, University of São Paulo, Brazil
[¹leobremartins@usp.br - ²w.z@usp.br]

The article presents a doctoral research in progress at the Institute of Psychology, University of São Paulo, Brazil, with financial support by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP). The research investigates spontaneous and typically contemporary paranormal/anomalous experiences in contexts of high specificity, in an ontological and phenomenological study. This is an ethnographic study, with incursions in three Brazilian contexts: Serra do Cipó, in the state of Minas Gerais, the city of Ipuacu, in the state of Santa Catarina and an esoteric UFO group with offices in many states of the country. These are urban and rural contexts currently presenting a high amount of episodes centered on UFO experiences such as alien abductions, alien contacts with spiritual guides, persecutions and burns by lights from the sky on isolated roads and physical confrontations with aliens (i.e. fights), but that aggregate spiritual healings, out-of-body experiences, channeling of messages, crop circles, poltergeists, prophecies about the end of the world, telepathy, apparitions of spiritual entities, memories of past lives and mystical ecstasies. Although the ethnographic incursions have begun in 2012 and will extend through 2015, previous incursions have occurred since 1997. Through ethnography, it is possible to investigate spontaneous anomalous experiences *in loco*, at the instant that they happen, while it investigates conditions before and after by the constant presence of the first author in the chosen contexts. Thus, we intend to potentiate a dynamic understanding of such experiences and the contexts in which they occur, in order to complement and dynamize the static findings offered by our previous quantitative research, which is also comparatively discussed in the article. From the findings, we intend to discuss transcultural aspects, by comparison with findings in other countries, and the local particularities of Brazilian contexts, which becomes relevant in face of the exoticism and the amount of anomalous experiences in the country, in addition to confronting the explanations that are offered in each context for the episodes with scientific explanations allowed by the research.

In this article, initial findings are presented and discussed, revealing high mixture between hegemonic and marginal cultural references, such as hegemonic religions, Brazilian folklore, classic paranormal beliefs, science fiction, conspiracy theories, modern technology and ufology. At the same time, discussed scientific explanations include cognitive dissonance, subjective validation, particularly permissive networks of meaning that are formed by the syncretism of hegemonic cultural references, individual psychological demands, heterodox interpretations for artificial and natural phenomena that are known to science, transliminarity, healthy schizotypy, peculiarity, premorbid indicators in childhood and occasional episodes of fraud. Some episodes present contours that suggest the possibility of effective anomalies, resisting to explanations and methods that are so far utilized. Thus, the investigated episodes assume different contours in relation to the most investigated anomalous experiences as being particularly exotic, frequent and multifaceted, providing a superlative opportunity to investigate psychological and sociological processes for the emergence of spontaneous anomalous experiences, which also gains relevance in face of the predominance of the experimental investigation.

A REMARKABLE PHOTOGRAPHIC ANOMALY AND THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF ITS INTERPRETATION

Gerhard A. Mayer

Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP), Freiburg, Germany
[mayer@igpp.de]

With this paper the case of an unusual photographic anomaly is presented. The picture with the “extra,” an uncanny face-like shape, was taken deep in the night during a birthday party in a barbecue area on a hill in the south German countryside. The reported circumstances as well as the quality of the “extra” itself seemed to be so interesting and challenging that an investigative team from the IGPP examined the case in detail and from two perspectives. The first concerned the nature of the “extra” itself with regard to possible conventional explanations. The second was directed towards the social processes within the group of adolescents and young adults in response to the alleged anomaly. For these purposes, an expert opinion which analysed the digital image file in detail was required. Furthermore, two field investigations, including a local survey and interviews with several people who were directly concerned, were conducted.

Many of the concerned people were strongly disturbed by the face-like shape. Speculation about its origin sprang up, and different stories about strange experiences attached to that place circulated. The attempted explanations have been partly conventional and partly paranormal. The most accepted explanation was to the effect that the “face” belonged to a nature spirit, a kind of guard of the particular place who was attracted by the commotion caused by the party noise. With our interviews, we found out that there an incubation period existed during which an atmosphere has been created which is known as being favourable for the occurrence of paranormal phenomena. Furthermore, the people directly concerned showed features of an increased affinity for paranormal phenomena resp. of a focus person.

We conclude that conventional explanations have been assessed as implausible and thus highly unlikely even though they cannot be absolutely ruled out. The expert report of the analysis of the digital picture excluded the possibility of subsequent manipulation of the image data file. After considering all of the available context information a *mis-en-scène* scenario seems to be as implausible as the occurrence of a made-up unknown person at the location by chance. In contrast, some circumstances of the case argue for the possibility of a paranormal incident. We identified four reasons: (1) the “incubation period” of the phenomenon, (2) the time of occurrence and the state of mind of the people directly concerned, (3) the psychical structure of one or more of the people concerned, and (4) the location. Among typical patterns known as favourable for the occurrence of paranormal phenomena, differences can be seen which do not fit into the “classical” patterns. It seems to be an intermediate case because several factors argue for a place-linked anomaly, but there are also elements which could point to a person-centred aspect. However, ultimately the “extra” remained an enigma.

ARE SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENTERS PSYCHIC?

Adrian Parker¹ & Brian Millar

¹*Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg*
[adrian.parker@psy.gu.se]

A review of the literature makes a strong case for successful experimenters using their own psi ability in order to produce positive results either directly or in a concert with those of their participants. Examples are given of the successful performance of psi-conducive researchers when they were participants in experiments—such as the Ganzfeld. The personal histories of well-known experimenters suggest that in at least some cases this ability has existed prior to their success as experimenter. Some ways of “forensically” revealing the influence of experimenter psi, are presented. A theoretical background in terms of current observational theory and current views of consciousness is briefly reviewed. Experimenter psi is seen as having far-reaching implications for both psychology and parapsychology.

DECOMPOSITION OF FIELD RNG OUTPUTS USING HAAR WAVELETS: A MUSIC EXPERIMENT

Takeshi Shimizu,¹ Hideyuki Kokubo^{1,2} & Masato Ishikawa¹

¹*School of Information and Communication, Institute for Informatics of Consciousness, Meiji University, Japan* - ²*Institute of Living Body Measurements, International Research Institute, Japan*
[shim1zu@hotmail.com]

Previous field RNG studies have used a 1-s scale to calculate chi-square statistics when analyzing RNG outputs. As the 1-s scale is conventional but arbitrary, an alternative approach is desirable. In this study, we applied wavelet analysis to RNG outputs during field events to decompose the sum of squares into multiple levels using a Haar filter. It is expected that the multi-scaled chi-square analysis can be used to determine the optimal scale for field consciousness based on the most biased chi-squares for specific events. Nevertheless, the Global Consciousness Project (GCP) has already reported several anomalies using the 1-s scale (Nelson, 2001), and Shimizu & Ishikawa (2013) showed relatively good results using the 1-s scale.

These results suggest that the 1-s scale is sufficient to detect field consciousness. Thus, we explored (1) how the conventional 1-s scale can be related to other scales and the scale-dependent effect sizes determined, and (2) how sensitive the wavelet analysis is for field RNG outputs.

A music listening experiment was designed in which we chose music files based on the criterion that play time is approximately 4 min 16 s (power of 2). Seventeen music files of approximately this length were chosen from the author's personal music directory as psychological stimuli. The first author participated in the experiment as a subject with 10 repetitions for a file. The wavelet analysis decomposed the original RNG sequences into multi-level sums of squares. Using the sum of squares for each level, an ANOVA was conducted to examine music factors (17 pieces), levels (6; fine to coarse), and interactions. We observed marginal main effects of music without level effects or interactions, which was suggestive of self-similarities of the RNG outputs while listening to music.

ABSTRACTS

Panels

PANEL 1

ALTERATIONS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND PSI

Etzel Cardeña (Chair)
CERCAP, Lund University, Sweden
[etzel.cardena@psy.lu.se]

Throughout history, ostensible psi phenomena have been related to qualitatively distinct states of consciousness or procedures associated with them, including meditation, dreams, and states of possession by spiritual beings. Although the research program of J. B. Rhine did little to evaluate this reputed association, various studies, summarized by Honorton (1977), found that some altered states of consciousness did seem to increase psi abilities in controlled studies, a conclusion that was generally held in a more recent review (Luke, 2011). This general idea was a catalyst for the development of one of the most successful psi research paradigms, the ganzfeld, which homogenizes sensory stimulations and, presumably, affects the state of consciousness of various participants. An unfortunate side effect of the success of the ganzfeld paradigm has been the neglect of systematic research on other procedures and states, and psi research in general has failed to keep up with developments in the study of consciousness, including appropriate measures to use and multivariate analyses (Cardeña, 2011). In this panel we will center on three techniques to affect consciousness and their effects on psi performance: hypnosis, meditation, and psychedelic drugs, discussing what has been found so far and, as importantly, what additional questions remain to be investigated systematically.

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HYPNOSIS, DISSOCIATION, AND PSI

Etzel Cardeña
CERCAP, Lund University, Sweden
[etzel.cardena@psy.lu.se]

Dissociation has been related to psi functioning in different ways: as the lack of integration between conscious and non-conscious processes (implicit measures of psi); the psi ability of some mediums who, by definition, experience a dissociated identity; and the correlation between dissociation as a trait and reports of ostensible psi experiences (Cardeña, 1998; Cardeña, Lynn, & Krippner, in press). There have also been anecdotal reports of psi abilities among people diagnosed with

dissociative identity disorder (erstwhile known as “multiple personality disorder”) (Van de Castle, 1993). However, there has been no concerned attempt to evaluate whether dissociation as a trait correlates with psi performance in controlled experiments. Similarly, from its inception mesmerism and later hypnosis was related to reports of psi abilities. Although many of these reports could nowadays be explained away through deficient experimental controls, some remain a challenge for skeptical interpretations. More recent meta-analyses continue to find that hypnotic conditions seem to increase psi performance, although the mechanisms through which this may happen are debatable (e.g., Stanford & Stein, 1994). In a series of studies (e.g., Cardeña, Marcusson-Clavertz, & Wasmuth, 2009; Marcusson-Clavertz & Cardeña, 2011), we are attempting to elucidate how dissociation and hypnosis may relate to psi in controlled protocols. So far, the pattern seems to point out to a complex interaction between these variables, experienced alterations of consciousness, and other variables. Finding personality traits and consciousness states that facilitate psi performance should help in the search for the elusive conditions that may produce more reliable psi results.

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PSI AND PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

David Luke

University of Greenwich, Great Britain
[drdluke@googlemail.com]

This presentation will discuss the relationship between psychoactive substances and psi, although focusing mainly on so-called extrasensory perception (ESP)—telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance—rather than psychokinesis (PK), because this latter phenomenon suffers from a paucity of research in relation to psychopharmacological agents. The review is based on research borrowed widely, but by no means exhaustively, from parapsychology as well as transpersonal studies, anthropology, ethnobotany, phytochemistry, psychiatry, psychotherapy, psychopharmacology, and neurobiology, particularly neurochemistry. The overview will cover: (a) field reports of intentional and spontaneous phenomena incorporating anthropological, historical and clinical cases, and personal accounts, (b) surveys of paranormal belief and experience in relation to substance use, (c) experimental research on drugs and psi, and (d) a methodological critique of the experimental research with recommendations for further work.

MEDITATION AND PSI: RESEARCH REVIEW

Serena M. Roney-Dougal

Psi Research Centre, Glastonbury, Great Britain.

[serena@psi-researchcentre.co.uk]

During the 1970s interest in maximising conscious awareness of psychic information focused on the effects of altered states of consciousness. Part of this programme of research investigated meditation as a state of consciousness that was potentially psi-conductive. Sixteen studies were run, with mixed results, that Honorton (1977) found gave a highly significant finding of improvement in psi scoring after meditation ($p = 6 \times 10^{-12}$). Between 1978-1992 there were six more studies, which Schmeidler (1994) summarized with the conclusion that meditation may be psi-conductive when the meditators accept the testing procedure. Most of the research used beginners in meditation and looked at the effect of meditation on receptive psi using both forced-choice and free-response methodologies. More recent research has also looked at the effect of meditation on active psi, such as a study by Radin et al. (2012) looking at the effect of mental intention on the double-slit experiment in quantum physics, which found that meditators affect the outcome. One series of research looked at the effect of distant influence on quality of meditation. Schmidt (2012) did a meta-analysis of the twelve studies run between 1993 and 2006 again finding significant results ($p = .009$). Some of this research was done with Western meditators and some in Bali, this being the first time that a series of research studies were done with non-Western participants. There were clear cultural differences, with Eastern meditators showing far less distraction. Four studies run between 2002 and 2008 looked at the difference between beginners and advanced meditators in India, working both with Yogis and Tibetan Buddhist monks (Roney-Dougal & Solfvin, 2011). The results indicated that years of practice correlated with increasing levels of psi scoring. Another recent study, working with advanced meditators, looked at the effect of meditation on presentiment (the unconscious physiological response to a forthcoming stimulus), again with significant results.

Overall though, research with meditators has been fairly sparse despite the clear effect of meditation on both psi awareness and psi influence. However, a huge variety of types of meditation have been used and only one preliminary attempt has been made to compare different types of meditation. It is necessary now to start exploring the characteristics of meditation that makes it psi-conductive. Nor have the cultural differences been explored—is this another effect of belief or some other characteristic of meditation? This is a promising line of research that needs far more attention.

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PANEL 2

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ITALIAN PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS TO
INTERNATIONAL PARAPSYCHOLOGY**

Alejandro Parra (Chair)

INTRODUCTION

Alejandro Parra

Instituto de Psicología Paranormal, Buenos Aires, Argentina
[rapp@fibertel.com.ar]

Interest in psychic phenomena in Italy has a long history. A list of renowned Italian psychical researchers includes Cesare Lombroso and Enrico Morselli, known for their studies of medium Eusapia Palladino and their psychological and psychiatrically-oriented observations of mediumship, as well as figures such as Ferdinando Cazzamalli, Giovanni Battista Ermacora, and William Mackenzie, whose research and theories of psychic phenomena are important developments in the history of parapsychology in Italy. However, none of them achieved the fame, published so much, or explored so many diverse areas of the field as Ernesto Bozzano, considered by Nandor Fodor to be “the dean of Italian psychical researchers and spiritualists”.

In Italy, the coordinated planned study of Italian parapsychology started in November 1901, when Angelo Marzorati founded the *Società di Studi Psicici* (Society of Psychical Studies) in Milan, and started a series of experimental research with the mediums Charles Bailey, Augusto Politi, Eusapia Palladino and Lucia Sordi. Among the members, there were such well-known personalities as the anthropologist, psychiatrist and criminologist Cesare Lombroso; the physiologist Filippo Bottazzi; and the neuropsychiatrist Enrico Morselli, whose book *Psicologia e Spiritismo* (*Psychology and Spiritism*) is certainly a classic in our field. We must also cite Luigi Barzini, Antonio Fogazzaro, Luigi Capuana, Ernesto Bozzano, Antonio Bruers, William Mackenzie, and Rocco Santoliquido who were interested in parapsychology at different levels.

In Rome, in 1937, four well-known scholars, Ferdinando Cazzamalli, Luigi Romolo Sanguineti, Giovanni Schepis and Emilio Servadio founded the *Società Italiana di Metapsichica* (Italian Society of Metapsychics), which, on January 23rd, 1941, was recognized by a State Government decree. In 1946, after the war, a section of Italian Society of Metapsychics led by Professor Cazzamalli left the Society and formed the present *Associazione Italiana Scientifica di Metapsichica* (AISM, Italian Scientific Association of Metapsychics) in Milan. Later on the *Società Italiana di Metapsichica* changed its name to *Società Italiana di Parapsicologia*, using the term “parapsychology” instead of the more traditional “metapsychics.” In 1948, the Centro Studi Parapsicologici (Center for Parapsychological Studies) was established in Bologna. The founders were Dr. Buscaroli, Dr. Marabini and Dr. Cassoli. At first it was a section of the AISM of Milan; then it led an autonomous life asserting itself as the most active center, particularly in the experimental field.

In 1959 in Naples, the magazine *Uomini e Idee* (*Men and Ideas*) started publication. In 1965 it

was replaced by *Informazioni di Parapsicologia* (*News on Parapsychology*), as an organ of the *Centro Italiano di Parapsicologia* (Italian Center of Parapsychology), a new association that joined the other three already in existence. At the end of 1968 there was established in Pavia the *Centro Italiano di Studi Metapsichici* (Italian Center of Metapsychic Studies), with a more limited program: the organization and study of psychic healers in Italy. Finally, in Rome, in 1960 the *Facoltà di Scienze Psichiche e Psicologiche* (Faculty of Psychical and Psychological Sciences) of the *Accademia Tiberina* was established.

This concludes the historical survey of the associations interested in parapsychology in Italy. I think it is appropriate now to give an idea of the work of each of these associations and of the trend, too often not very clearly stated, of the association itself or its members.

PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW

Massimo Biondi

Centro Studi Parapsicologici, Bologna, Italy

[mbiondi10@libero.it]

As well as in other European countries, in Italy psychical research sprang from an interest in hypnosis and the phenomena that can be obtained in hypnotic trance. After some isolated antecedents around the half of the 19th century, it was in 1885-6 that some neuro-psychiatrists began to observe and experiment with unorthodox topics such as the reversal of the states of mind because of magnets and the “transmission of the will”, as showed by “artists” in theatres. These beginnings were completely autonomous from the foundation of the Society for Psychical Research, SPR (1882) and from the activities in the field of Spiritism. However, within a few years, most of the studies and interest towards occult matters applied to the mediumship of Eusapia Palladino, and in the subsequent 30 years, in the area of occult matters, this was the issue most discussed, debated and experimented (with committees, instruments, rigorously planned tests) by a lot of men of science and medicine. It should be noted that those who dealt with Eusapia were split between supporters of the genuineness of her supernormal powers (and of the intervention of the spirits at her séances) and critics, who believed that the woman was cheating, if not always, at least very often. The question remains unresolved.

Only a few of the “psychical researchers” of that time broadened their studies to embrace other kinds of phenomena. Between these, we have to remember Cesare Lombroso (telepathy, poltergeist/hauntings), Enrico Morselli (telepathy, mediumistic phenomena with E. Palladino and other people), Giovanni Battista Ermacora (all psi phenomena, poltergeists). Ermacora also founded a journal, on the example of the *Proceedings of the SPR*, and was the first one to systematically carry in Italy the interests, the debates, and the criteria of analysis of the SPR. In a few years after his death (1898), however, his work was dispersed and none had the interest or the skill to resume it.

From the second decade of the 20th century, with the decline of the activities of E. Palladino, new topics and new men did emerge for Italian psychical research. The biologist and philosopher William Mackenzie examined the “clever horses” of Elberfeld and other animals seemingly possessing abilities to communicate with humans, and studied a few mediumistic cases. The physician Rocco Santoliquido, head of the Italian Administration for Health and Medicine, was

involved in a strange case of intellectual mediumship, after which he became interested in psychical research, so that in the subsequent years he was instrumental for strengthening the spiritistic monthly journal *Luce e Ombra (Light and Shadow)* and for the creation of the Institut Métapsychique International, in France. The psychiatrist Ferdinando Cazzamalli experimented with various kinds of “energetic” phenomena, like cases of psychokinesis, of dowsing, and the presumed effects of the laying of the hands on the sthenometer of Paul Joire, and was convinced to have evidenced electromagnetic brain waves produced in coincidence of the supernormal activities of the mind. From a historical perspective, Cazzamalli had the merit to have founded (thanks to the aid from Fascist authorities) a Society, the first one of this kind in Italy, which not only was active for decades in promoting and spreading the public opinion of many parapsychological themes, but attracting to this field many personalities and students coming from various areas of the Italian main culture: between them, a lot of physicists and physicians, and eminent figures like Emilio Servadio, Ernesto de Martino, Alighiero Naddeo, Vincenzo Nestler and others. Almost all of these men realised field inquiries, studies and experimental research on different “psychical” topics.

After the World War II, other Societies similar to the Cazzamalli’s arose in different towns of Italy, and research and a number of studies were accomplished almost everywhere. Of main relevance were, however, the works performed in Rome (Naddeo, Nestler etc.) and Bologna (Piero Cassoli, Enrico Marabini), which consisted of analyses of spontaneous cases like hauntings, telepathic dreams, religious apparitions and phenomena (weeping statues of the Virgin Mary and similar); tests with psychics and “spiritual healers”; and experiments on ESP and PK, often according procedures partly different from those used by Rhine and his followers, like representation of animated scenes, new methods to re-submit targets to subjects in ESP tests, and so on. Continuous in those decades (like during the last twenty years of the 19th century) has been the activity of a number of journalists, often biased toward a spiritistic view of the discussed phenomena, but open to all the topics of psychical research: their writings on the main newspapers and magazines, and ultimately their participation to radio-television programs, did greatly spread information on parapsychology. The birth and the activities of a committee of skeptics, like the American CSICOP, about the end of the 20th century produced in Italy a clear cutback of space and favour for parapsychology and the activities of the parapsychologists. As a result of this and other social crises, at the beginning of the 21st century the research (observations, surveys, experiments) and discussions (conferences, seminars, courses, conferences) in the field of parapsychology declined significantly and today this activity is practiced with difficulty and by a small number of people.

THREE IMPORTANT ITALIAN PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL PERSONALITIES OF THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES OF THE PAST CENTURY

Giulio Caratelli

Centro Interdisciplinare Ricerca Parapsicologica, Rome, Italy
[duebinf@tin.it]

Three personalities, serving inside the *Società Italiana di Metapsichica (SIM)*, founded in 1937 and

from 1955 turned into *Società Italiana of Parapsicologia* (SIP), nowadays no longer active, are worthy of new consideration for their constant engagement in the investigation of paranormal phenomena, their proposals, and the specific contributions given to the parapsychological community. Moreover their work takes place in a period to be considered very important for that organization of research, a period that can be set approximately between Forties and Fifties of the past century. They are Tito Alippi (1870-1959), Giovanni Schepis (1894-1963) and Francesco Egidi (1880-1969).

Tito Alippi, a physicist, tried to address the problem of the possible physical and material foundations of some paranormal manifestations and stressed the need not to interrupt the investigation of great physical mediumship in favour of the so-called “statistical-quantitative” research and the ability to find reliable mediums to investigate striking manifestations often not much considered favourably, as they were not easily an object of study with the experimental method.

Giovanni Schepis, a statistician, studied in-depth prevalently the different topics to methodological level related to the investigation of the paranormal manifestations, mainly to the application of the statistical method in the context of laboratory experimental tests.

Francesco Egidi, a man of letters, studied mediumistic figures in depth, in particular Daniel Dunglas Home and the Rome’s mediums Vincenzo Sassaroli and Augusto Politi, and was also involved in the relations that can exist between painting and parapsychology, questioning himself about the so-called artists’ “modified states of consciousness”, the features of the produced works and the possibility that determined perceptions of other realities can be placed upon the internal and individual stimuli towards artistic work.

THE BOLOGNA CENTER FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES (CSP): RESEARCH BETWEEN 1970 AND 1985

Ferdinando Bersani

University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy
[ferdinando.bersani@unibo.it]

In this talk I will try to summarize the research activity carried out by the CSP between 1970 and 1985, mainly focusing on the research in which I was directly involved, which is a significant part of the entire activity. Unfortunately the results of these studies were only published in Italian, and thus practically unknown to the international community of parapsychologists, except their mention in a book on the history of parapsychology by J. Beloff. In the beginning of the Seventies most of the research was directed toward the observation of spontaneous cases, including psychics; one of the most gifted was Luisa Godicini, an exceptional clairvoyant in the Italian landscape. In the same period many well known psychic healers were followed by Piero Cassoli, who reported his medical observations and results in a seminal book on this topic. Another extraordinary case studied by the CSP was that of the mediumistic painter Giuseppe Lanzillo, who produced something like 230 paintings of exceptional quality in a restricted interval of time (about 12-14 months) in a nocturnal trance-like state, before stopping in the same sudden way as he had initiated. At the beginnings of the Seventies the Raudive Voices phenomenon (or “metaphonia”) attracted the CSP’s attention,

since it became popular in Italy and many people, mainly composed by persons who had lost sons or very loved relatives, wrote books and/or publicized their experience.

A group of the CSP, including myself, deeply investigated the phenomenon, trying to obtain anomalous voices with different techniques and to simulate them in different ways; after about a decade of observations and experiments, the most peculiar conclusion was that the phenomenon could be explained in terms of psycho-acoustic illusions, a sort of acoustic “Rorschach inkblots”. In the middle of the Seventies the claimed paranormal star Uri Geller came up on the scene and became popular all over the world. We had a few informal meetings with him in which we tried to make non-systematic observations, some of them very exciting at first sight. But the possibility of a systematic study was offered by a number of children (the so called “miniGellers”), who, watching Uri Geller on TV, started to imitate him, obtaining an apparently paranormal metal bending and other anomalous effects. In particular, a restricted group of the CSP (me as a physicist, Aldo Martelli as a chemist, Angela Peduto as a medicine student, Anna Bononcini as a psychologist) followed four miniGellers, three of them for at least 5-6 years, performing observations both in spontaneous situations and in systematic laboratory experiments.

A critical report summarizing these numerous experiments was published on *Psychoenergetics: The Journal of Psychophysical Systems* in 1983. We consider these experiments (together with those performed in UK by J. Hasted) as the most accurate on this kind of phenomenon. At the end of the Seventies a systematic study was performed by F. Bersani and A. Peduto on the mediumnistic painters, which was the basis for a University thesis, reporting an attempt to compare this kind of artistic production with that of schizophrenics. Other studies regarded different cases of poltergeists. Except for some isolated reports in Italian journals and some papers in the CSP’s publications, most part of them were published in internal reports.

THEORETICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS AT THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Patrizio Tressoldi

University of Padova, Padova, Italy
[patrizio.tressoldi@unipd.it]

I will present a description of the status of theoretical and experimental contributions at the level of public and private institutions now active in Italy. At present there are only three people working in public institutions and universities: one at the Dipartimento di Psicologia Generale (Dpt. of General Psychology) at Padua University, one at the Dipartimento di Fisica (Dpt. of Physics) at Bologna University, and a third at the Dipartimento delle Scienze Biologiche (Dpt. of Biological Sciences) at Naples University. On the contrary, there are at least four independent private groups with an interest in parapsychology now active. What impact does this have on their scientific activity in mainstream science and on informing lay people?

The private groups play an important role in the dissemination of information related to different parapsychological arguments, allowing them the possibility to meet and exchange information with people who have the same interests. However this level of activity does not contaminate in any way

the scientific community and the media that disseminates scientific findings. Simply put, it flows as it was in a parallel world.

At the level of mainstream science the situation is similar to all European countries, except England. That is, there are no formal courses for undergraduate or graduate students and the word “parapsychology” must be banned or used with much care to prevent aversive reactions and mental and emotional associations with pseudo-science. This well-known situation is a combination of multiple negative components, whose responsibility in part, in my opinion, is in charge of theoretical and experimental parapsychologists and the rest to the dominant theoretical paradigms related to human mind-functioning.

Which problems are the responsibility of active parapsychologists? I see basically the following: their scientific contributions are almost exclusively disseminated by specialized journals with restricted accessibility. Consequences: they are simply ignored” (i.e. “*We originally set out to survey the 12 studies referenced in Storm et al. (2010) that yielded z scores over 2.0. Unfortunately, it is difficult to obtain these studies as they are neither carried by many academic institutions nor available through interlibrary loan.*” From Rouder, Morey and Province, 2013). Solutions: (a) Specialized journals must be open access; (b) Parapsychologists must disseminate their findings by using mainstream journals preferring those with open access. The second solution will force parapsychologists to move mainstream science, psychology in particular, towards their theoretical models and experimental protocols instead of waiting for the contrary. In my view, this is the only strategy that could break the wall of prejudice against the types of phenomena that apparently violate common held assumptions about mind-functioning.

ABSTRACTS

Workshops

WORKSHOP 1

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING GOOD STATISTICAL PRINCIPLES

Jessica Utts

Department of Statistics, University of California, Irvine, CA
[jutts@uci.edu]

The three most basic methods of statistical inference are hypothesis testing using p -values, confidence intervals, and simple Bayesian analyses. While many researchers and consumers of statistical information know how to generate these analyses, understanding and interpreting them is much more difficult. For instance, here are some common *misinterpretations* related to p -values: (i) A tiny p -value means that there must be a large effect. (ii) A non-significant outcome means that the effect size is 0, so there is no point in reporting an effect size. (iii) If one study finds a smaller p -value than another study, then the study with the smaller p -value must represent a larger effect size. (iv) The p -value gives the probability that the null hypothesis is true.

In this workshop I will cover the following topics, and possibly others as time permits:

- A basic overview of hypothesis testing
- How to interpret p -values
- The meaning of effect size and why it's important to report effect sizes
- How to interpret confidence intervals
- What can be learned from confidence intervals that differs from what can be learned from hypothesis tests
- How to define replication
- Statistical power and how it should be considered when designing a study
- A basic explanation of Bayesian analysis

WORKSHOP 2

HISTORY OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Peter Mulacz (Chair)

PREFACE: ON “HISTORICAL PARAPSYCHOLOGY”

Peter Mulacz

Austrian Society for Parapsychology and Border Areas of Science, Vienna, Austria
[peter.mulacz@parapsychologie.info]

There are at least two main aspects that make the discussion of historical parapsychology an interesting and demanding one: (1) the wealth of empirical data collected in the old days, and (2) conceptual developments. Moreover, the integration (or otherwise the lack of) of psychical research/parapsychology into the scientific community at different times and in different countries is also an interesting topic. All these facets merit following them closely.

**PIERRE JANET AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH: THE PIONEER,
THE REPENTANT, AND THE BORDER-GUARD**

Renaud Evrard

*University of Strasbourg; Institut Métapsychique International, Paris; Center for Information,
Research, and Counseling on Exceptional Experiences, Paris, France*
[evrardrenaud@gmail.com]

This paper argues that Pierre Janet's (1859–1947) contribution to psychical research didn't stop with the publication of the series of 22 experiments of remote suggestion he conducted at Le Havre. Quite the contrary, I will show how this field of research has shaped all of his work through three successive stances: the pioneer, the repented psychologist, and the border-guard.

As a young professor of philosophy, he contributed significantly to the debate on the role to be given to psychical research in science, by influencing how the French did psychical research: Whereas Charles Richet previously introduced a methodology based on statistical analysis of card guessing, Janet shifted toward a study of gifted subjects. As his career took him to the highest academic circles, and to the chair of experimental and comparative psychology at the Collège de France (1902), he decided to limit his research agenda to the psychopathology of the “oscillations

of mind”. What might explain Janet’s withdrawal? Apparently embarrassed by his reputation as a psychical researcher, Janet tried to make amends with the academic thought of his time. I will argue that, by studying psychological automatism in hysterical subjects, he would conflate abnormal and anomalous, thus attracting the criticisms of psychical researchers.

He agreed, however, in 1899 to co-direct with Richet the Institut Général Psychologique (IGP), which he would steer toward orthodox psychology, while Richet would try to hold the Institut to its original mission of psychical research. The demarcation would become more frank in 1902 with the extraction of the Société Française de Psychologie from a subgroup of the IGP. Finally, Janet assumed the role of a frontier-guard, by rejecting for example Richet’s *Traité de Métapsychique*, and by pathologizing supernatural beliefs and mysticism in other publications. Nevertheless, several psychical researchers still relied on his work to explore the psychology of the paranormal without falling into reductionist psychopathology, and paving the way for anomalistic psychology and contemporary studies of altered states of consciousness.

A NEGLECTED PIONEER? THÉODORE FLOURNOY’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Everton de Oliveira Maraldi, Carlos S. Alvarado, Wellington Zangari,
& Fatima Regina Machado

*Inter Psi, Laboratory of Anomalistic Psychology and Psychosocial Processes,
University of São Paulo, Brazil
[evertonom@usp.br]*

Théodore Flournoy (1854–1920) was the first professor of psychology in Europe who became a member of the Faculty of Sciences instead of the Faculty of Philosophy. He was considered the founder of psychology as a science in the part of Switzerland where French dialect is spoken. He had considerable impact on Dynamic Psychiatry, especially from his study of the medium called Hélène Smith (*Des Indes à la Planète Mars*, 1900), and he also contributed to divulgate psychoanalytic ideas in Geneva, besides supporting Jung when he criticized and broke with Freud. Beyond his important contributions to psychology, Flournoy was an assiduous researcher of mental and physical mediumship, and other supranormal phenomena.

He admired Frederic Myers’ work (1843-1991). While there is no doubt that Flournoy was sometimes inspired by Myers, actually both authors influenced each other, as can be seen by their writings. Myers’ considerations about Hélène Smith in *Human Personality* (1903) show, in this sense, how his own ideas about the creative power of the subliminal mind are largely based on Flournoy’s findings. Flournoy has always advocated the scientific study of these phenomena as an important area that should not be ignored and he was elected corresponding member of the Society for Psychical Research. In his book *Esprits et Mediums* (1911) we find a research on mediums that Flournoy began in 1898. He had sent several questions to 81 members of the Société d’Etudes Psychiques in Geneva. Those questions investigated, among other topics: when and under what

circumstances the person realized he/she possessed psychic faculties; changes in these experiences over time; observations of mediumistic faculties in other people and in the medium's family, and the influence of physical, medical or moral conditions on mediumship. Thus, unlike many other researchers of his time who focused on the study of supranormal experiences, Flournoy had adopted an innovative psychological perspective, elevating the medium to the condition of an interesting object to be studied in a psychological perspective, instead of an exclusively parapsychological perspective. Emphasis was no longer on the mediums' spiritual abilities, but also included their personality and their history.

Flournoy has also speculated on the contribution of telepathy and the medium's subconscious imagination to explain veridical communications, without any need to resort to spiritualistic hypothesis, an idea that was not new to him. Since the early days of psychical research and parapsychology, and even in earlier times, there has been speculation about the supposed explanation of mediumistic communications through extra-sensory abilities, and not by the action of spirits. Flournoy represents a newer version of these speculations, with greater emphasis on the dynamics of the subconscious. In this regard, his ideas were René Sudre's inspiration (1880-1968) to formulate a psychological theory of paranormal experiences which was integrated to the "knowledge of his time" related to biology and physics. Despite his important contributions, Flournoy has been scarcely mentioned in books on psychology and parapsychology. The purpose of this presentation is to rescue some of his legacy to the fields of psychical research and parapsychology.

LEARNING FROM HISTORICAL CASES: MADAME D'ÉSPERANCE

Adrian Parker

Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
[adrian.parker@psy.gu.se]

The case of Madame D'Ésperance or Elisabeth Hope Reed (1855-1919) is still quoted in the literature as an enigmatic case of materialisations. Melton writes (1996) "that her case must remain open, though there is every reason to believe that she simply was never caught." In fact she was caught initially in Newcastle in 1880 and in Helsinki in 1893. A more well-documented but little known exposure occurred in 1890 during her long residence in Gothenburg, where the University archives (Torsten Hedlund Archive) have provided some of the material for the present evaluation. Yet the true enigma is that Elisabeth Hope was strongly supported and given credibility by hundreds of witnesses including the Russian diplomat Alexander Aksakof, who carried out investigations with her and wrote the foreword to her book *Shadow Lands*. The most spectacular of these involved a "case of partial dematerialisation" (1898). This was later explained by Hereward Carrington (1907) as a rather simple trick.

Despite these detractions, Elisabeth Hope Reed impressed a leading industrialist in Gothenburg, James Keiller and an English merchant living there, Matthew Fidler, who befriended her. The well-

known and respected psychiatrist prof. Poul Bjerre also attended her séances in Gothenburg and attempted unsuccessfully to find the means by which she materialised exotic plants during her séances. While discounting the spirit origin of the phenomena, Bjerre was strongly inclined to belief in their paranormality.

In stark contrast to this, the Gothenburg archive provides a detailed description of how the medium dressed up as materialisations and used doll-like constructions to produce the effects. They also contain the original photo-prints from the session (to be shown) that confirm this explanation. It is however not a complete explanation. Part of the explanation is provided by the writings of Bjerre and by Hope-Reed's own book. Elisabeth Hope-Reed seems to have had a convincing and charming manner, which evoked sympathy in others so that it was difficult to suspect her of fraud. Another part of the explanation is found in her book, which gives a good account of a *dissociated state* in which the phenomena occurred. To understand how hundreds of sitters could be deceived, reference is made to what we now know from the *psychology of motivation and perception*. The psychologist and Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman (2012) advises us, before giving credibility to an observer's judgment, to first assess how competent the observer is in dealing with the environment he makes the judgment in. Most observations of materialisations have been made by naïve observers in unusual and less the optimal conditions. Under these circumstances audio-visual recording becomes a vital asset.

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INDRIDI INDRIDASON (1883-1912), THE BEST DOCUMENTED NORDIC MEDIUM

Erlendur Haraldsson
University of Reykjavík, Iceland
[erlendur@hi.is]

Indridi Indridason (1883-1912) became a medium in 1904 when he accidentally joined the first sitter group in the country. Immediately the table started moving violently, he became afraid and wanted to run away. The Experimental Society was founded by academics to investigate the phenomena around Indridi Indridason. A detailed record was kept of their séances and the various phenomena they observed such as levitations of objects and their movements in midair, some of them being musical instruments that were played upon at the same time by invisible forces. Sometimes the medium was levitated and two men were needed to hold him on the ground. Light phenomena of various forms and colours were seen and sometimes a human figure was seen in a "pillar" of nebulous light, near as well away from the medium. Extensive reports about him were presented at the first two international conferences on psychical research in Copenhagen and Warsaw.

ALBERT, BARON SCHRENCK-NOTZING (1862-1929) LIFE AND WORK

Peter Mulacz

Austrian Society for Parapsychology and Border Areas of Science, Vienna, Austria
[peter.mulacz@parapsychologie.info]

For several reasons - his scientific reputation, his social standing as nobleman, and the enormous wealth he could avail of due to a very fortunate marriage - von Schrenck-Notzing dominated the parapsychological community of his era in Germany and other German-speaking countries and had, by virtue of his friendship with Charles Richet, considerable impact even beyond these countries. While v. Schrenck-Notzing is well remembered as a psychical researcher/parapsychologist, albeit by no way undisputed, his early engagements in “anomalous psychology” (particularly in hypnosis and hypnotherapy) and in forensic psychology as well as in the emerging science of sexology are almost forgotten. Like Sigmund Freud, six years his senior, v. Schrenck-Notzing paid extended study visits to both Jean-Martin Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim.

With v. Schrenck-Notzing's turn towards parapsychology some of his old friends and colleagues showed signs of increasing alienation (like Max Dessoir [1867–1947]) or even open hostility (like his contemporary Albert Moll [1862–1939]).

Starting from his early days in hypnotism until the end of his parapsychological oeuvre (especially his *opum magnum Materialisationsphänomene* [*Phenomena of Materialisation*]) there has been one *leitmotif*: ideoplasmy, i.e. the manifestation of ideas, of mental images, upon the physical body. While such manifestation occurred in cases like the “dream dancer Magdeleine” within the realm of “normal” albeit rare and unusual psychophysics, in the case of Eva C. (Marthe Béraud) the boundary to paranormal effects has clearly been transgressed.

Physical phenomena of mediumism became the main yet not the sole interest of v. Schrenck-Notzing. Most notably are his experiments with the Schneider brothers, particularly Willy, the elder one. It is a pity that v. Schrenck-Notzing didn't live up to the experiments of father and son Osty at the IMI with the younger brother, Rudi (1930-31), that resulted in undisputable evidence for at least macro-PK unless evidence for the existence of ectoplasm. Yet these still belong to the “era Schrenck-Notzing” that extended beyond his own lifespan until the change of the political system in Germany in 1933 when the National-socialist party came to power.

v. Schrenck-Notzing had a keen interest in RSPK, too. He published several such cases; his vision was to transform the somehow erratic RSPK-phenomena into a regular and coordinated séance mediumship. To meet this end, he supported the investigation of several “promising” cases (e.g., Eleonora Zugun, Oscar R. Schlag).

Finally, it needs to be noted that during his long career as an investigator of physical mediumship he became more and more cautious. Always he was prepared to oblige to suggestions of enforcing the surveillance imposed on the mediums (e.g., the “electrical control apparatus” designed by Eng. Amereller similar to the one later employed by Harry Price).

Summarizing, v. Schrenck-Notzing had well established the “parapsychological paradigm” of his era (in a Kuhnian sense), based on the core notions of ectoplasm, ideoplasmy, and telekinesis by pseudopods being a pre-form, a primordial state of materialisation. While that paradigm was largely replaced by the Rhinean paradigm (which itself is becoming more and more obsolete nowadays) the

single elements of that paradigm - ectoplasm in the first place - do represent open questions for the future. Taking up this challenge is more than overdue.

FANNY MOSER AND SIGMUND FREUD: COMMENTS ON PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND PSYCHOANALYSIS IN GERMANY

Eberhard Bauer

Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health, Freiburg i. Br., Germany
[bauer@igpp.de]

The personal papers of Dr. Fanny Moser (1872–1953), a Swiss biologist and parapsychologist, whose files are kept at the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) in Freiburg (Germany), contain two original letters of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), which are of considerable interest from the point of view of the history of psychotherapy as well as of the history of psychical research. Fanny Moser's letters to Freud are no more extant (or, at least, could not be found yet). However we know from her biography and from Freud's correspondence with her that she had contacted him primarily for two reasons: (1) She wanted Freud's support to have her mother, Freifrau Fanny Moser-von Sulzer-Wart (1848-1925), declared incapable of managing her own affairs (the mother, a very wealthy woman, had threatened to disinherit her daughter), and (2) she wanted to learn more about Freud's personal attitude towards "occult" phenomena. In Freud's first letter to Moser of July 13, 1918, he mentions the fact that he had published the medical history of Fanny Moser's mother in his book *Studien über Hysterie* [*Studies on Hysteria*] (1895, written together with Joseph Breuer), using for her a pseudonym "Mrs. Emmy v. N. ..., forty years old, from Livland". In his second letter of October 10, 1918, he comments on this fact and summaries his own position regarding problems of the "occult." Freud's third letter to Fanny Moser from July 13, 1935, which was accidentally found among Dr. Gerda Walther's correspondence, is an acknowledgment of the receipt of Moser's opus magnum published 1935 as *Okkultismus. Täuschungen und Tatsachen* [*Occultism. Delusions and Facts*] with some interesting comments on the contents of the book.

ABSTRACT

Invited Address

WHERE DOES CONSCIOUSNESS COME FROM?

Simon Thorpe

Deputy Director of the Brain and Cognition Research Centre (CerCo), Toulouse, France

[simon.thorpe@cerco.ups-tlse.fr]

We all know what it is to be conscious. But how did this consciousness appear during evolution? The standard scientific view is that our consciousness results from the activity of the billions of neurons in our brains. If that is the case, there must have been a point in evolution when nervous systems became sufficiently sophisticated to allow consciousness and we can ask when this point occurred. Is it limited to primates? Or mammals? Or Vertebrates?

These are tricky questions. But another problem is inherent in the idea that consciousness can be understood in the standard information-processing model common to much scientific thinking. According to this view, consciousness allows some specific functions to be implemented, functions that can be modelled in software simulations. But a major problem with that idea is that if those functional explanations are true, why are our brains not just sophisticated computers? Why do we need to be conscious, if all that is happening is stuff that can be run in software?

In this talk I will discuss some of the reasons why I believe that even hard nosed materialists will at some point be forced to admit that there is more to consciousness than just neuronal activity. Recent developments in Psi research seem to be making this change more and more inevitable.

ABSTRACTS

Posters

AIMS: A 55 YEAR- OLD ITALIAN ASSOCIATION DEVOTED TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Giorgio Cozzi

Associazione Italiana Scientifica di Metapsichica
[giorgio.cozzi@isoformazione.it]

For over half a century, the AISM, Associazione Italiana Scientifica di Metapsichica (*Italian Association for the Scientific Study of Metapsychics*), continues to support studies and interests toward parapsychology in Italy. The first international PA Convention that takes place within the borders of Italy seems to be an appropriate occasion to introduce to foreign colleagues to the activities and the field of action of the Association.

History. In 1946 Ferdinando Cazzamalli, psychiatrist and physician known for his hypothesis on the “radiant brain”, founded the AISM, which has come to represent an important guide for Italian parapsychology. The AISM today is a bulwark of parapsychology studies in Italy.

Objectives. The AISM is committed to inquiries into paranormal phenomena, to ensure the truthfulness and consistency of research data, to study people seemingly provided with ESP and PK in order to identify new sensory skills and mental faculties, and to help the scientific development of parapsychological knowledge.

Activity. The AISM has organized, and currently organizes, international and national conventions, meetings and conferences, has run training courses to develop the knowledge of parapsychology and supplied advices on the subject. The Association is present on the web to spread a proper knowledge of the paranormal, and to be notified of spontaneous cases and poltergeist events. The AISM is present on media, TV/Radio, to show paranormal phenomena and to describe hypotheses and theories. The AISM is available to give information and consultancy on field of parapsychology and is present on several social networks to assure a correct view of parapsychology.

Experiments. In the past the AISM has conducted a lot of experimental research with traditional tools (Zener cards, dice, seeds and plants for PK effects, and so on) in all of the fields examined by the parapsychologists (ESP, PK, “distant healing”, etc.) and is now equipped with appropriate technology devices (PCs, RNGs and REGs, EEG). It has performed both free-response and forced-choice tests. More, AISM researchers have tested psychics and talented people (e.g., Venia, Eder) and have amassed a lot of data on “empty chair precognition” and psychometrics.

Q.P. Part of AISM’s efforts are now focused on projects for the realignment of some Italian parapsychological activities to experimental methods. Also, a group of AISM researchers are working on the development of a scale to measure the “Paranormal Quotient” (QP), that is the level of “Paranormal Intelligence”, composed by “Logical” and “Emotional” Intelligence, and identified through an appropriate scale.

Metapsichica. *Metapsichica* is a journal edited by the AISM, devoted to collecting reports of studies and experiments performed by the researchers of the Association, and to propose a “scientific view” of contemporary parapsychology. In the past, other than Italian parapsychologists, the journal has gathered contributions by a lot of foreign students and researchers. Recently, due to financial shortcomings, it has been published irregularly; nevertheless a new issue has been printed in the occasion of the present PA Convention, with in-depth analyses of the meaning and the future perspectives of our discipline.

Abstracts of Presented Papers

Aism International Project. The AISM invites worldwide foreign researchers to identify and collect (with a set of specific data) premonitory dreams, said to be experienced by a lot of people, with the aim to made an international registry from which it will be possible to draw data for focused studies.

THE JOURNAL OF EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AND PSYCHOLOGY

Erika A. Pratte & Jacob W. Glazier¹

¹*University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA, USA*
[exceptionalpsychology@gmail.com]

The *Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology* (www.exceptionalpsychology.com) is an online, international, and scholarly journal dedicated to the exploration and advancement of exceptional psychology, which is a field that studies experiences and phenomena traditionally germane to parapsychology and yet, goes beyond in breadth. Some examples of experiences under investigation by exceptional psychology include survival after death, out-of-body experiences, extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, poltergeists, mediumship, and hauntings. Also included are cryptids, abduction scenarios, possession, psychic healing, and synchronicity.

Exceptional psychology approaches these phenomena from a neutral and bracketed stance. Simply put, exceptional psychology uses an integrative and phenomenological approach. This includes embracing the varieties of inquiry such as experimentation, ethnography, phenomenology, personal narratives, art, and poetry. Each seeks to reveal, in its own way, the essence of the exceptional experience. What's more, exceptional psychology encourages the application of helpful aspects of certain exceptional experiences to clinical praxis. This is just as much a part of the project as research and theorizing. For instance, clinical approaches include the use of psychic healing practices and the application of mediumship to the bereavement process.

The *Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology* encourages the submission of manuscripts, creative writing, artwork, and video related to exceptional experiences. The journal is peer-refereed; submissions will be blindly reviewed and a recommendation for acceptance, revisions, or denial will be made to the editors. *JEEP* is published biannually and welcomes submissions all year. Technical manuscripts should conform to APA style. Creative writing and narrative accounts do not need to adhere to a professional style, although proper citation of sources is required. All written documents must be sent as a Microsoft Word file (.doc / .docx). Visual submissions should be sent as separate attachments, preferably in either .jpeg or .pdf format. Video and/or audio submissions should be sent as a YouTube link. Authors will be notified by email of the review board's decision.

RE-EVALUATING MENTAL ABSORPTION IN ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES: AN INFORMATION PROCESSING MODEL OF PSI AND ITS CONCOMITANTS

Michael Tremmel

Bender Institute of Neuroimaging, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany
[michael.tremmel@psychol.uni-giessen.de]

Certain personality traits and disorders correlating with paranormal experiences also correlate with one another and have been assimilated to higher-order concepts, like *anomalous sensitivity*, *anomaly-proneness*, *boundary thinness*, *environmental sensitivity*, and *transliminality*. Such neologisms have little explanatory value. These concepts are missing a mechanism that causes mental content to cross from unconscious into consciousness, between different mental functions or processes in general, or a mechanism that causes persons to become sensitive or prone to anomalies. This poster presents two possible mechanisms that could cause all that.

Not all of the traits and disorders may be related directly to psi. Their relation may be based on underlying processes. Such processes may be *mental absorption*, *cognitive dedifferentiation* (CDD, including eidetic imagery and synesthesia), and something to be termed *sensory processing amplification* (SPA, to be found in hyperaesthesia, sensory-processing sensitivity, sensory defensiveness, and sensory over-responsivity). A variety of findings and anecdotal reports suggest that these processes are concomitants of psi and that psi and its concomitants co-vary from weak and temporary forms to strong forms and traits or even disorders. Tellegen and Atkinson conceptualized absorption as a trait marked by the proneness to experience episodes of total attention. Re-evaluating absorption, it is assumed that this trait is a weak form and strong forms include absorption as a trait marked by rather consistent total attention (to be found, e.g., in cases of autism spectrum disorders) and absorption as a skill mastered through intensive focused attention meditation.

Psi, CDD, and SPA all result in experiences involving some kind of anomalous perception. Because attention modulates perception, in the information processing model introduced here, absorption modulates the intensity of these experiences. It amplifies and dedifferentiates mental input (emotions, imagery, memories), psi input, and sensory input.

While strong forms of absorption are assumed to result rather consistently in strong forms of CDD leading to strong synergetic experiences as well as in strong forms of SPA leading to strong high-sensitivity-related experiences, this may not necessarily be the case for psi and paranormal experiences. A gatekeeper mechanism may inhibit psi input. It is hypothesized that the inhibition of this gatekeeper mechanism modulates the frequency of paranormal experiences. If psi input with personal meaning is subliminally perceived and captures attention bottom-up, the gatekeeper mechanism may be temporarily inhibited, resulting in a spontaneous paranormal experience (e.g., in a case of crisis psi), and a conscious one, too, given that absorption is strong. If the gatekeeper mechanism gets disintegrated and absorption is strong, psi input may reach constantly conscious perception (as can be found in some psychics), resulting in consistently conscious paranormal experiences.

Possible implications of this model are discussed.