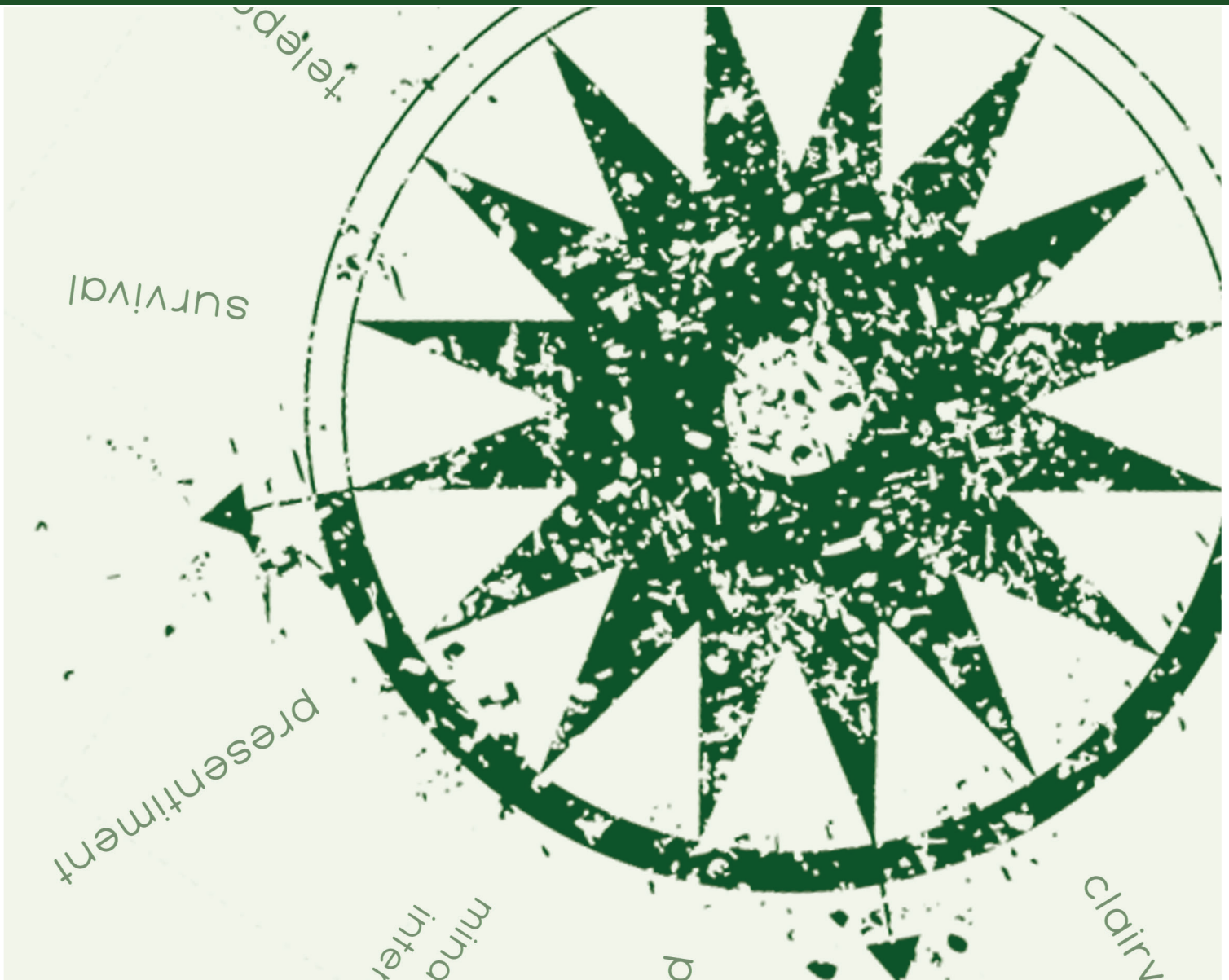


Book of Abstracts

58th Annual Convention of the
Parapsychological Association

39th SPR International
Annual Conference

a joint event at the University of Greenwich, UK, July 16-19, 2015



Abstracts of Presented Papers

58th Annual Convention of the Parapsychological Association
Joint with the 39th International Annual Convention of the Incorporated
Society for Psychical Research
Greenwich University, United Kingdom, July 16-19, 2015

Renaud Evrard, Ph.D.
PA Program Chair

Chris A. Roe, Ph.D.
SPR Program Chair

CONVENTION COMMITTEE

James C. Carpenter, Ph.D.: PA President

Annalisa Ventola, B.A.: Executive Director

Renaud Evrard, Ph.D.: Program Chair

Jean-Michel Abrassart, M.A.: Program Chair assistant

David Luke, Ph.D.: Arrangements Chair

Ross Friday, M.A.: Arrangements Chair assistant

Nikolaos Koumartzis, Ph.D.: Art Director

John C. Poynton, Ph. D.: SPR President

Chris A. Roe, Ph.D.: SPR Program Chair

Peter Johnson: SPR Arrangements Chair

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Renaud Evrard, Ph.D.: Program Chair

Jean-Michel Abrassart, M.A.: Program Chair assistant

Chris A. Roe, Ph.D.: SPR Program Chair

Baroni Francesco, Bersani Ferdinando, Bierman Dick, Biondi Massimo, Bowie Fiona, Braeunig Matthias, Brandmeyer Tracy, Braude Stephen, Broughton Richard, Burns Jean, Cardeña Etzel, Carr Bernard, Catala Pascale, Delorme Arnaud, Edge Hoyt, Evrard Renaud, Haraldsson Erlendur, Holt Nicola, Houtkooper Joop, Hövelmann Gerd, Hunter Jack, Irwin Harvey, Kennedy Jim E., Kittenis Marios, Kramer Wim, Lamont Peter, Louange François, Luke David, Machado Fatima Regina, Macias Pierre, Maraldi Everton, Marwaha Sonali, Meyer zu Erpen Walter, Mulacz Peter, Nahm Michael, Nelson Roger, Neppe Vernon, Ouellet Eric, Pallikari Fotini, Palmer John, Parra Alejandro, Playfair Guy Lyon, Powell Diane, Rabeyron Thomas, Radin Dean, Roe Chris, Roney-Dougal Serena, Ruickbie Leo, Schmidt Stefan, Schriever Frederike, Severi Bruno, Sherwood Simon, Simmonds-Moore Christine, Smith Paul, Spottiswoode James, Storm Lance, Tierney Ian, Tressoldi Patrizio, Utts Jessica, Varvoglis Mario, Ventola Annalisa, Watt Caroline, Zangari Wellington, Zingrone Nancy.

SPR PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Carr Bernard, Gauld Alan, Murdie Alan, Roe Chris [Chair], Ruffles Tom, West Donald, Weaver Zofia.

CONTENTS

Introduction	8
Program of Events	9

ABSTRACTS OF THURSDAY 16TH JULY		
Session 1: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 1		
Paul Rogers & Emma Lowrie	<i>Varieties of childhood maltreatment as predictors of adult paranormality [SPR]</i>	14
Wan Yee Teo & Nicola Lasikiewicz	<i>The effect of superstitious thinking on psychosocial stress responses and perceived task performance [PA]</i>	15
Malcolm Schofield	<i>Mental representations of the supernatural: A cluster analysis of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief [SPR]</i>	16
Session 2: Psychodynamic and phenomenological approaches		
Renaud Evrard	<i>The paradigmatic breakdown: A model to define the dynamics of exceptional experiences [PA]</i>	17
Janine de Peyer	<i>Uncanny communication, psychoanalysis, and the porous mind [PA]</i>	18
Christine Simmonds-Moore	<i>An interpretative phenomenological analysis exploring synesthesia as an exceptional experience: A case study [PA]</i>	20
Robert McLuhan	<i>Preview of the online encyclopedia that forms part of the Buckmaster project [SPR]</i>	21
Session 3: Making sense of spontaneous cases		
Mary Rose Barrington	<i>From jott to a basic law normalizing the paranormal [SPR]</i>	22
Alan D. Murdie	<i>'Extraordinary Evidence' versus 'Similar Fact Evidence': Proving the occurrence of psi outside the laboratory [SPR]</i>	23
Deborah Delanoy	<i>Robert L. Morris and the Koestler Chair [PA Award]</i>	24
Session 4: Methodological approaches		
Hideyuki Kokubo, Yasuyuki Nemoto & Kimiko Kawano	<i>Discussion on the methodology of water crystal formation as a detection system for psi [PA]</i>	25
Dick J. Bierman, James P. Spottiswoode & Aron Bijl	<i>Can results in 'experimental parapsychology' be accounted for by 'questionable research practices'? [PA]</i>	26
Peter Mulacz	<i>Methodological issues of research in the field of physical mediumism: General considerations triggered by the case of Kai Muegge [SPR]</i>	27

ABSTRACTS OF FRIDAY 17TH JULY		
Session 5: Experimental approaches 1		
Göran Brusewitz, Adrian Parker, David Luke, & Annekatrin Puhle	<i>An experimental study of physiological connectedness among twins in relation to attachment [PA]</i>	29
Thomas Rabeyron & Olivier Charlet	<i>Anomalous experiences, mental health, creativity, and psi [PA]</i>	30
Chetak Nangare	<i>A study of the differences among Vipassana meditators and non meditators on the Weird coincidences scale-2 [PA]</i>	30
Chris A. Roe & Laura Hickinbotham	<i>Performance at a precognitive remote viewing task, with and without ganzfeld stimulation [PA]</i>	31
Session 6: Experimental Approaches 2		
Caroline Watt, Milan Valášek & Emma Mark	<i>Precognitive dreaming: A replication study using an innovative and efficient diary checklist method [SPR]</i>	32
Deborah L. Erickson	<i>Mixed methods exploratory study of alleged telepathic interspecies communication with domestic dogs (canis lupus familiaris) [SPR]</i>	34
Julia Mossbridge	<i>Healing the rift in parapsychology: Turning the non-conscious/conscious gap into a collaborative handshake [PA Award]</i>	35
Session 7: Survival and mediumship		
Michael Potts	<i>World view and interpretation of evidence for survival after death: Toward a pluralistic approach [SPR]</i>	36
David T. Saunders, Rachel E. Evenden & Callum E. Cooper	<i>Establishing the CSAPP archives and survival case collections from the Eileen J. Garrett Library [SPR]</i>	38
Chris A. Roe, David Bruton, Chris Connelly, David T. Saunders & Rachel E. Evenden	<i>Building links between communities: Establishment of a research laboratory for the scientific study of mediumship at the Arthur Findlay College [SPR]</i>	39
Etzel Cardeña	<i>Introducing Parapsychology: A Handbook for the 21st Century [PA Award]</i>	40
Session 8: PA awards and presidential address		
Eberhard Bauer	<i>A view from the 'magic hill' [PA Award]</i>	41
James C. Carpenter	<i>Psi is not a psychological anomaly [PA Presidential Address]</i>	42

ABSTRACTS OF SATURDAY 18TH JULY – MAIN ROOM (A)		
Session 9A: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 2		
Jean-Michel Abrassart	<i>UFO phenomena and psychopathology: A case study</i> [PA]	43
Ross Friday & David Luke	<i>Individual differences in psychosocial and neurological predictors of surveillance detection via extrasensory means</i> [PA]	43
Jürgen Kornmeier & Gerhard Mayer	<i>The alien in the forest or when temporal context dominates perception</i> [PA]	44
Ann R. Winsper, Paul Rogers & John E. Fisk	<i>Are they really talking to you? Individual differences in EVP experients</i> [SPR]	45
Session 10A: Workshop historical collections		
Eberhard Bauer	<i>1: Library and historical collections at the IGPP Freiburg, Germany</i> [PA]	47
Renaud Evrard	<i>2: The scientific imaginary: French perspective on a heritage in danger</i> [PA]	47
Gerd Hövelmann	<i>3: Two private estates, important testimonia of the history of parapsychology in Europe</i> [PA]	47
Wim Kramer	<i>4: Preserving the history of Dutch parapsychology as integral part of the history of the sciences in The Netherlands</i> [PA]	48
Michael Tremmel	<i>5: Digitizing the Journal of Parapsychology</i> [PA]	49
Sergii Vakal	<i>6: PSIHUB – A parapsychological database</i> [PA]	49
Session 11A: Historical approaches		
Alma López Vale	<i>Kant as a spirit-seers defender: A different approach</i> [SPR]	49
Callum E. Cooper	<i>Havelock Ellis's involvement in psychical research</i> [SPR]	50
Erlendur Haraldsson	<i>Methods in studying the physical mediumship of Indridi Indridason, quantitative analyses of his phenomena and how they differ from those of D.D. Home and Rudi Schneider</i> [SPR]	51
Session 12A: Discussion on roads taken		
Eberhard Bauer	<i>1: I did it my way – Auf Deutsch</i> [PA]	53
Stanley Krippner	<i>2: Two branches of the road taken</i> [PA]	54
Deborah Delanoy	<i>3: A parapsychological career – a lucky happenstance</i> [PA]	54
Mario P. Varvoglis	<i>4: Parapsychologist, Princeton to Paris</i> [PA]	55
James C. Carpenter	<i>5: Chasing a question</i> [PA]	55

ABSTRACTS OF SATURDAY 18TH JULY – SECOND ROOM (B)		
Session 9B: Spiritual practices and paranthropology		
Giulio Caratelli & Maria Luisa Felici	<i>Ernesto de Martino's contributions to parapsychology [PA]</i>	56
Etzel Cardeña, Sophie Reijman, Cathrine Lawaetz Wimmelmann & Christian Gaden Jensen	<i>Psychological health, trauma, dissociation, absorption, and fantasy proneness among Danish spiritual practitioners [PA]</i>	57
Leo Ruickbie	<i>The secret of magic: A psycho-, socio-, or psi-somatic effect? [SPR]</i>	57
Session 10B: Discussion on paranthropology		
Jack Hunter	<i>1: A brief history of paranthropology [PA]</i>	58
David Luke	<i>2: Exploring the apparently psi-conductive but methodologically elusive nature of ritual psychedelic use [PA]</i>	59
Serena Roney-Dougal	<i>3: Methodology of doing psi research in other cultures and the effect of cultural beliefs [PA]</i>	59
Stanley Krippner	<i>4: Two more sessions with Amyr Amiden, a Brazilian claimant medium [PA]</i>	60
Session 11B: Theoretical approaches		
Mario P. Varvoglis & Peter Bancel	<i>Micro-psychokinesis: Exceptional or universal? [PA]</i>	60
John Palmer	<i>Synchronicity and psi: A controlled comparison [PA]</i>	62
George Williams	<i>Are different standards warranted to evaluate psi? [PA]</i>	63
Session 12B: Discussion on practical applications		
Julia Mossbridge, Thomas Rabeyron, & Patrizio E. Tressoldi	<i>1: The many advantages of practical applications for parapsychology [PA]</i>	64
Julia Mossbridge	<i>2: Building a smartphone app for presentiment experiments: Results thus far and lessons learned [PA]</i>	65
Thomas Rabeyron	<i>3: Psi applications: can we take control of Psi? [PA]</i>	65
Anabela C. Ventura	<i>4: Intention and brain-to-brain communication with non-invasive techniques [PA]</i>	66
Flavio Burgarella and Patrizio E. Tressoldi	<i>5: Heart-body-mind connection at a distance as a potential new form of communication [PA]</i>	67
Patrizio Tressoldi & EvanLab Team	<i>6: Cardio-alert and mind-switch, two practical applications of presentiment and pk phenomena [PA]</i>	67
J.B. RHINE BANQUET		
Les Lancaster	<i>The faces of God: Taboo and metaphor in venturing beyond physicalism [PA Banquet Address]</i>	68

ABSTRACTS OF SUNDAY 19TH JULY		
Session 13: Experiential approaches		
Richard Squires	<i>The meaning of ecstasy</i> [SPR]	69
Elizabeth C. Roxburgh & Rachel E. Evenden	<i>"Most people think you're a fruit loop": An exploratory study of clients' experiences of seeking support for anomalous experiences</i> [SPR]	70
Lesley-Ann Smith, Callum E. Cooper & Jonathan T. Ryan	<i>"It happens too frequently for me to be coincidental": A qualitative analysis of telephone telepathy experiences</i> [SPR]	71
Session 14: New beginnings		
Walter von Lucadou	<i>The Correlation-Matrix Method (CMM): A new light upon the repeatability problem of parapsychology</i> [PA]	72
Callum E. Cooper, Chris A. Roe & Graham Mitchell	<i>Examining what cognitive mechanisms make spontaneous post-death phenomena therapeutic for the bereaved</i> [PA Award]	73
Chairmaine Sonnex, Chris A. Roe & Elizabeth C. Roxburgh	<i>Testing the Pagan prescription: Using a randomised controlled trial to investigate Pagan spell casting as a form of distant spiritual healing</i> [SPR]	74

ABSTRACTS OF POSTERS		
Alexander De Foe	<i>Out-of-body experiences (OBEs) and body ownership illusions – A phenomenological overlap?</i> [PA]	76
Marcelo Eremián	<i>Comparative study on phenomenological aspects in recurrent and shared apparitional experiences</i> [PA]	77
Renaud Evrard	<i>Six functions of heterodoxy: Examples from the interaction between psychology and parapsychology</i> [PA]	77
Maria Luisa Felici & Giulio Caratelli	<i>Yoga: Spiritual evolution and extraordinary powers</i> [PA]	78
Gerhard Mayer	<i>At the frontiers of knowledge: A new German handbook of scientific anomalistics</i> [PA]	79
Michael Tremmel, Ulrich Ott, Eberhard Bauer, Dieter Vaitl, Annalisa Ventola & John Palmer	<i>Digitizing the Journal of Parapsychology</i> [PA]	81
Sergii Vakal & Igor Bombushkar	<i>Psihub – a user-friendly bibliographic database of parapsychological periodicals with built-in search engine and Russian/English interface</i> [PA]	82
Lauren Wellbourne & Ciarán O'Keeffe	<i>Connecting with the dead: Assessing the personality characteristics of Spiritualist mental mediums</i> [PA]	84

Introduction

Greenwich is known worldwide for giving us Greenwich Mean Time, the standard time used all over the Earth, and that imaginary line that is the prime meridian of the world. In this time zone, what can happen? This July, the parapsychological community will be synchronized. The Parapsychological Association and the Society for Psychical Research have decided to combine the annual conferences that give the rhythm to their researchers. One day switched off and another dawns. Whereof is this joint convention the beginning?

Our model for this convention was the 2008 joint convention in Winchester, the third of this kind, where the productions of both organizations were wonderfully articulated. Many delegates are members of both organizations and attend both conferences anyway, so there are many rationales for such a collaboration. ‘Time’ was already at the center of this event with Bierman’s new model of Consciousness Induced Restoration of Time Symmetry, and Daryl Bem’s experiments on some anomalous retroactive influences on cognition and affect, destined to become one of the ten most controversial psychology studies ever published, according to the British Psychological Society.

This year, we will experiment something new: *parallel sessions*. The audience will be split on Saturday with several papers, one workshop and three panels in two different rooms at the same time, as is done in many scientific conventions. Impossible to attend all without any control on bilocation or entangled minds! How to choose, for instance, between a panel of experienced parapsychologists who will transmit the lessons of their journey and another panel, in a nearby room, elaborating future applications of psi with the young guard? This could be frustrating but responds to the massive influx of high quality papers. Parallel sessions also have benefits, such as leaving more opportunities for discussion and choosing the topics that interest us most. Nevertheless, we kept this multiplication of temporality as low as possible to maintain a majority of moments together. These conventions have to remain transdisciplinary and on a human scale. This will create an opportunity, when we will rejoin around the J.B. Rhine Banquet address by the Professor Emeritus Les Lancaster, to ask each other: “And you, what was your experience of the PA-SPR Convention?”

On Thursday, Professor Emeritus Deborah Delanoy will devote her invited address, following her Outstanding Career Award in 2014, to the late Prof. Robert L. Morris and the Koestler Parapsychology Unit (KPU) at the University of Edinburgh. With a reception sponsored by the KPU, we will celebrate that evening the 30th anniversary of this unit whose influence on the integration of parapsychology in academic circles is well known.

In addition to being welcomed to the University of Greenwich by our hosts David Luke and Ross Friday, ten other UK universities contributed to this convention (Edinburgh, Northampton, Derby, Liverpool John Moores, Manchester, Central Lancashire, Buckinghamshire New University, Goldsmiths College London, Chester, and Bristol). The ‘Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes’ of the University of Northampton even sets a new record with 11 participants contributing an average of 2 presentations each. Overall, 72% of the contributions to this convention are done by academics from all over the world. We will surely not be at this level without Morris and his legacy.

The Friday, on the occasion of his invited lecture as a result of his 2013 Honorton Award, Etzel Cardeña will present *Parapsychology: A Handbook for the 21st Century*, a 2-volume collective work that updates our knowledge since the first handbook directed by Wolman almost 40 years ago. This book will be one of the laureates of the new PA Book Award, created to “recognize books in the field of parapsychology that make significant contributions to science and to the cultural conversation about the implications of parapsychology”. Several other awards and invited lectures by awardees will be given during the convention.

All in all, we will have this year 54 PA and 20 SPR contributions, divided into 18 sessions and 8 posters, covering the whole range of approaches of psi phenomena, paranormal beliefs, and exceptional experiences.

Many thanks are due to all Program Committee members for their time and effort in reviewing and providing valuable feedback on submissions, and to all the authors who contributed their work. I am ever grateful to the session chairs for their help in making it all run smoothly. Much gratitude goes to the Convention Committee team and especially to Annalisa Ventola and David Luke for working so hard to bring this together.

I hope that this conference will honor the spirit of rigor, transdisciplinarity, and internationality, which characterizes the actions of the PA and the SPR. On behalf of everyone in the Convention Committee I would like to welcome you to the 2015 PA and SPR joint convention. Synchronize your watches: it begins...

Renaud Evrard, Ph.D.
University of Lorraine, France
Center for Information, Research, and Counseling on Exceptional Experiences

The Joint Annual Convention of The Parapsychological Association, Inc. (58th)
and The Incorporated Society for Psychical Research (39th)
July 16—19, 2015
University of Greenwich, London

Program of events

Wednesday 15th July

16:00-19:00 Registration begins at Room: KW318 (King William building, 3rd floor)
– please make own arrangements for dinner.

Thursday 16th July

Room: KW315 (King William building, 3rd floor)

08:55-09:00	WELCOMING REMARKS
	Session 1: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 1
09:00-09:30	Paul Rogers & Emma Lowrie – <i>Varieties of childhood maltreatment as predictors of adult paranormality</i> [SPR]
09:30-09:45	Wan Yee Teo & Nicola Lasikiewicz – <i>The effect of superstitious thinking on psychosocial stress responses and perceived task performance</i> [PA]
09:45-10:15	Malcolm Schofield – <i>Mental representations of the supernatural: A cluster analysis of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief</i> [SPR]
10:15-10:30	Poster session [PA]
10:30-11:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 2: Psychodynamic and phenomenological approaches
11:00-11:15	Renaud Evrard – <i>The paradigmatic breakdown: a model to define the dynamics of exceptional experiences</i> [PA]
11:15-11:45	Janine de Peyer – <i>Uncanny communication, psychoanalysis, and the porous mind</i> [PA]
11:45-12:15	Christine Simmonds-Moore – <i>An interpretative phenomenological analysis exploring synesthesia as an exceptional experience: A case study</i> [PA]
12:15-12:30	Robert McLuhan – <i>Preview of the online encyclopedia that forms part of the Buckmaster project</i> [SPR]
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	Session 3: Making sense of spontaneous cases
14:00-14:30	Mary Rose Barrington – <i>From jott to a basic law normalizing the paranormal</i> [SPR]
14:30-15:00	Alan D. Murdie – <i>'Extraordinary evidence' versus 'similar fact evidence': Proving the occurrence of psi outside the laboratory</i> [SPR]
15:00-15:30	Deborah Delanoy – <i>Robert L. Morris and the Koestler Chair</i> [PA Award]
15:30-16:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 4: Methodological approaches
16:00-16:30	Hideyuki Kokubo, Yasuyuki Nemoto & Kimiko Kawano – <i>Discussion on the methodology of water crystal formation as a detection system for psi</i> [PA]

16:30-17:00	Dick J. Bierman, James P. Spottiswoode & Aron Bijl – <i>Can results in ‘experimental parapsychology’ be accounted for by ‘questionable research practices’?</i> [PA]
17:00-17:30	Peter Mulacz – <i>Methodological issues of research in the field of physical mediumism: General considerations triggered by the case of Kai Muegge</i> [SPR]
19:30-22:30	KPU 30 th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (Tralfagar Tavern)

Friday 17th July

Room: KW315 (King William building, 3rd floor)

	Session 5: Experimental approaches 1
09:00-09:15	Göran Brusewitz, Adrian Parker, David Luke, & Annekatrin Puhle – <i>An experimental study of physiological connectedness among twins in relation to attachment</i> [PA]
09:15-09:45	Thomas Rabeyron & Olivier Charlet – <i>Anomalous experiences, mental health, creativity, and psi</i> [PA]
09:45-10:00	Chetak Nangare – <i>A study of the differences among Vipassana meditators and non meditators on the Weird coincidences scale-2</i> [PA]
10:00-10:30	Chris A. Roe & Laura Hickinbotham – <i>Performance at a precognitive remote viewing task, with and without ganzfeld stimulation</i> [PA]
10:30-11:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 6: Experimental approaches 2
11:00-11:30	Caroline Watt, Milan Valášek & Emma Mark – <i>Precognitive dreaming: A replication study using an innovative and efficient diary checklist method</i> [SPR]
11:30-12:00	Deborah L. Erikson – <i>Mixed methods exploratory study of alleged telepathic interspecies communication with domestic dogs (canis lupus familiaris)</i> [SPR]
12:00-12:30	Julia Mossbridge – <i>Healing the rift in parapsychology: Turning the non-conscious/conscious gap into a collaborative handshake</i> [PA Award]
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	Session 7: Survival and mediumship
14:00-14:30	Michael Potts – <i>World view and interpretation of evidence for survival after death: Toward a pluralistic approach</i> [SPR]
14:30-14:45	David T. Saunders, Rachel E. Evenden & Callum E. Cooper – <i>Establishing the CSAPP archives and survival case collections from the Eileen J. Garrett Library</i> [SPR]
14:45-15:00	Chris A. Roe, David Bruton, Chris Connelly, David T. Saunders & Rachel E. Evenden – <i>Building links between communities: Establishment of a research laboratory for the scientific study of mediumship at the Arthur Findlay College</i> [SPR]
15:00-15:30	Etzel Cardeña – <i>Introducing Parapsychology: A Handbook for the 21st Century</i> [PA Award]
15:30-16:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 8: PA awards and presidential address
16:00-16:30	Eberhard Bauer – <i>A view from the ‘magic hill’</i> [PA Award]
16:30-16:50	PA Awards Ceremony
16:50-17:00	GROUP PHOTO

19:00-19:45	James C. Carpenter – <i>Psi is not a psychological anomaly</i> [PA Presidential Address]
19:45-21:00	SPR/PA PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION (Greenwich University, KW318)

Saturday 18th July [Main room = A]

Room: KW315 (King William building, 3rd floor)

	Session 9A: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 2
09:00-09:15	Jean-Michel Abrassart – <i>UFO phenomena and psychopathology: A case study</i> [PA]
09:15-09:45	Ross Friday & David Luke – <i>Individual differences in psychosocial and neurological predictors of surveillance detection via extrasensory means</i> [PA]
09:45-10:00	Jürgen Kornmeier & Gerhard Mayer – <i>The alien in the forest or when temporal context dominates perception</i> [PA]
10:00-10:30	Ann R. Winsper, Paul Rogers & John E. Fisk – <i>Are they really talking to you? Individual differences in EVP experients</i> [SPR]
10:30-11:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 10A: Workshop historical collections
11:00-12:30	Workshop “ <i>Historical collections including digitalization projects at parapsychological organizations in Europe</i> ” [PA] Eberhard Bauer [chair], Renaud Evrard, Gerd Hövelmann, Wim Kramer, Michael Tremmel, Sergii Vakal
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	Session 11A: Historical approaches
14:00-14:30	Alma López Vale – <i>Kant as a spirit-seers defender: A different approach</i> [SPR]
14:30-15:00	Callum E. Cooper – <i>Havelock Ellis’s involvement in psychical research</i> [SPR]
15:00-15:30	Erlendur Haraldsson – <i>Methods in studying the physical mediumship of Indridi Indridason, quantitative analyses of his phenomena and how they differ from those of D.D. Home and Rudi Schneider</i> [SPR]
15:30-16:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 12A: Discussion on roads taken
16:00-17:30	Panel discussion “ <i>Roads taken: Some career paths in parapsychology</i> ” [PA] James C. Carpenter [chair], Eberhard Bauer, Deborah Delanoy, Stanley Krippner, Mario P. Varvoglis
19:00-22:00	BANQUET (at the Old Brewery)
20:30	Les Lancaster – <i>The faces of God: Taboo and metaphor in venturing beyond physicalism</i> [PA Banquet Address]

Saturday 18th July [Second room = B]
Room: KW302 (King William building, 3rd floor)

	Session 9B: Spiritual practices and paranthropology
09:00-09.30	Giulio Caratelli & Maria Luisa Felici – <i>Ernesto de Martino's contributions to parapsychology</i> [PA]
09:30-10:00	Etzel Cardeña, Sophie Reijman, Cathrine Lawaetz Wimmelmann & Christian Gaden Jensen – <i>Psychological health, trauma, dissociation, absorption, and fantasy proneness among Danish spiritual practitioners</i> [PA]
10:00-10.30	Leo Ruickbie – <i>The secret of magic: A psycho-, socio-, or psi-somatic effect?</i> [SPR]
10.30-11.00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 10B: Discussion on paranthropology
11:00-12:30	Panel discussion “ <i>The Emerging Field of Paranthropology</i> ” [PA] Serena M. Roney-Dougal [chair], Jack Hunter, Stanley Krippner, David Luke
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
	Session 11B: Theoretical approaches
14:00-14:30	Mario P. Varvoglis & Peter Bancel – <i>Micro-psychokinesis: Exceptional or universal?</i> [PA]
14:30-15:00	John Palmer – <i>Synchronicity and psi: A controlled comparison</i> [PA]
15:00-15:30	George Williams – <i>Are different standards warranted to evaluate psi?</i> [PA]
15:30-16:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 12B: Discussion on practical applications
16:00-17:30	Panel discussion “ <i>Practical Applications of Psi</i> ” [PA] Julia Mossbridge [chair], Thomas Rabeyron [chair], Patrizio E. Tressoldi [chair], Flavio Burgarella, EvanLab Team, Anabela C. Ventura
19:00-22:00	BANQUET (at the Old Brewery)
20:30	Les Lancaster – <i>The faces of God: Taboo and metaphor in venturing beyond physicalism</i> [PA Banquet Address]

Sunday 19th July
Room: KW315 (King William building, 3rd floor)

	Session 13: Experiential approaches
09:00-9.30	Richard Squires – <i>The meaning of ecstasy</i> [SPR]
09:30-10:00	Elizabeth C. Roxburgh & Rachel E. Evenden – “ <i>Most people think you’re a fruit loop</i> ”: <i>An exploratory study of clients’ experiences of seeking support for anomalous experiences</i> [SPR]
10:00-10.30	Lesley-Ann Smith, Callum E. Cooper & Jonathan T. Ryan – “ <i>It happens too frequently for me to be coincidental</i> ”: <i>A qualitative analysis of telephone telepathy experiences</i> [SPR]
10.30-11.00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
	Session 14: New beginnings
11:00-11:30	Walter von Lucadou – <i>The Correlation-Matrix Method (CMM): A new light upon the repeatability problem of parapsychology</i> [PA]
11:30-12:00	Callum E. Cooper, Chris A. Roe & Graham Mitchell – <i>Examining what cognitive mechanisms make spontaneous post-death phenomena therapeutic for the bereaved</i> [PA Award]
12:00-12:30	Chairmaine Sonnex, Chris A. Roe & Elizabeth C. Roxburgh – <i>Testing the Pagan prescription: using a randomised controlled trial to investigate Pagan spell casting as a form of distant spiritual healing</i> [SPR]
12:30-13:30	LUNCH
13:30-14:30	PA ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
14:30-15:00	CLOSING REMARKS

ABSTRACTS OF THURSDAY 16TH JULY
Session 1: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 1
Chair: Caroline Watt

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

Paul Rogers¹, & Emma Lowrie²

¹*Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit, Goldsmiths College, University of London
London, UK*

²*School of Psychology, University of Central Lancashire
Preston, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

The current study extends this line of work by examining the degree to which various types of childhood maltreatment - specifically neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, parentification and parental threats of rejection, abandonment and physical punishment - predict adult paranormality. Mediation analysis (with bias-corrected bootstrapping) offered partial support for hypothesised relationships. As expected, child sexual abuse had a significant, direct effect on adults' self-reported anomalous experiences. Indirect relationships between childhood neglect, both sexual and emotional abuse, and benefits of parentification also existed for four outcome measures, namely anomalous experiences, beliefs, abilities and a general New Age orientation. These were mediated by a proneness to vivid/realistic and to a lesser extent make-believe fantasising. Contrary to expectations, childhood physical abuse, parent or sibling focused parentification and parental threats of rejection, abandonment and punishment were unrelated to all anomalous outcome measures with one exception; rejection threats were directly associated with fewer fears of anomalous phenomena. These findings are consistent Irwin's (2009) *Psychodynamic Functions Hypothesis*; the notion that adult paranormality offers an adaptive, needs-serving mechanism for coping with an often trauma-induced sense of diminished control. Methodological issues and ideas for future research are also discussed.

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

Wan Yee Teo¹, & Nicola Lasikiewicz²

¹*James Cook University
Singapore, China*

²*University of Chester
Chester, UK*

ABSTRACT

Paranormal belief is defined as belief in phenomena, which are scientifically unsubstantiated (Irwin, 2009). Superstitious thinking refers to a subset of paranormal belief, which refer to the belief that there is a causal link between action and outcome when no such causation exists (Matute et al., 2011; Thalbourne, 1997). Previous research suggests that people tend to invoke luck-related superstitions in stressful situations as an attempt to gain an illusion of control over outcomes. Based on this, it has been suggested that superstitious thinking may become more common in times of challenge, stress and uncertainty (Burger & Lynn, 2005; Keinan, 1994; 2002). Although previous research suggests that stress may influence the propensity for superstitious belief and that this belief may lead to enhanced performance, gaps in our knowledge remain. Specifically, (and to the authors' knowledge) no study has explored the influence of superstitious thinking on responses to an acute psychosocial stressor and further, whether exposure to stress would subsequently increase belief. The current study, therefore, aimed to explore whether belief in a 'lucky' pen would influence the psychological response to stress in the form of the Trier Social Stress Test (TSST) and whether endorsement of belief would increase following stress exposure. Further, the impact of superstitious belief on perceived task performance was explored. Participants ($N=114$) aged between 17 and 59 years ($M=22.98$, $SD=4.57$) from James Cook University Singapore, were recruited and randomly assigned to one of four conditions: (1) no-stress with no "lucky" pen; (2) no-stress with a "lucky" pen; (3) stress with no "lucky" pen; (4) stress with a "lucky" pen. The results revealed that participants provided with a "lucky" pen to complete the task reported lower state anxiety throughout the experimental session and more so after speech preparation, regardless of whether they were exposed to stress or no stress control. Further, those exposed to stress and in the non-superstition activation condition reported significantly higher state anxiety than those who were exposed to stress and told that the pen they could use was "lucky". In terms of performance, participants exposed to stress and given a "lucky" pen perceived their performance to significantly better than participants exposed to stress without the "lucky" pen, specifically in the speech preparation phase and interview phase but not during the mental arithmetic phase. A trend for superstitious thinking to increase post stress exposure was also observed and more so in those given the "lucky" pen but this observation just missed significance. The findings suggest that use of the "lucky" pen may have evoked superstitious thinking and altered the psychological appraisal of stress. The results corroborate existing research that belief in transferable luck may help an individual to psychologically cope with a stressor via illusory control. Hence, luck-related superstition is a unique coping strategy that could be beneficial in enhancing personal appraisal of task performance.

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

Malcolm Schofield¹
¹*University of Derby*
Derby, UK

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to establish a new typology of belief in the supernatural; categorising people based on their levels of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief. Examining how the various beliefs are defined was a further objective. The study examined the three concepts of religious, spiritual and paranormal belief in an attempt to examine how people mentally represent the supernatural. A new taxonomy of these three beliefs was posited. How these three beliefs have been defined and measured in the past was discussed. The various dimensions of each belief were further discussed making reference for example to intrinsic and extrinsic religious belief. The reasons for people having different levels of these beliefs were discussed, highlighting theories such as “Metaphysical Chauvinism” as a possible explanation. Previous research that used various methods to measure religious, spiritual and paranormal belief were highlighted including several studies that used cluster analysis to examine such concepts. Participants completed an online survey consisting of three questionnaires measuring religious (Revised Religious Life Inventory), spiritual (Intrinsic Spirituality Scale) and paranormal belief (Revised Paranormal Belief Scale). An opportunity sample ($n=307$) was used to conduct the three cluster analyses. The first was a replication of Irwin's (1997) study that examined the subscales of the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS). The second and main analysis was on the three scales, The Intrinsic Spirituality Scale (ISS), The Revised Religious Life Inventory (RRLI) and The Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS). Finally a *post hoc* analysis was conducted on the ISS and the subscales for the RRLI and the RPBS. The results revealed a four-cluster solution for each analysis and each analysis was shown to have internal validity. For the main analysis the clusters were labelled as follows: cluster one – “Believers”, cluster two – “Sceptics”, cluster 3 – “Conventional religious believers” and cluster 4 “Questioning believers”. The four cluster solution was discussed in relation to: firstly, the initial replication analysis and then to the *post hoc* analysis. The four-cluster solution for the main analysis was the labels applied to them were discussed. The theory of “Metaphysical Chauvinism” was supported however, the recommendation is that it should be renamed “Metaphysical Bias” noting that “conventional believers” may be less open to different ideas than their unorthodox counterparts. The clusters showed that four distinct groups emerged when cluster analysis was applied; however, it was acknowledged that there still appears to be a lack of consensus when defining supernatural beliefs. It is presented here that the cluster analysis approach is more effective than a simple scale that measures one area when trying to establish to *what* set of beliefs a person actually subscribes.

<p>Session 2: Psychodynamic and phenomenological approaches Chair: Wim Kramer</p>

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

Renaud Evrard¹

¹*University of Lorraine; Center for Information, Research, and Counseling on
Exceptional Experiences
Nancy, France*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

In all cases, the ExE places the individual in a state of cognitive and emotional dissonance in which the experience shifts his/her worldview. But not all ExEs are transformative because they only have the *potential* to alter or subvert the life of an individual. White qualified ExEs as "pre-paradigmatic" as they

are only transformative if the individual decides to invest meaning into it. For brevity, the multiple clinical and epistemological implications of such a model will only be sketched.

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

Janine de Peyer¹

¹*National Institute for the Psychotherapies,
New York, NY, USA*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

While skepticism about “telepathy” endures, notions of unformulated, dissociated, sub-symbolic, implicit, right-brain, mirror neuron, and sensorial forms of attunement are furthering psychoanalysis’ mission to understand unconscious communication *beyond* words. In view of this interest in non-verbal attunement, de Peyer invites a re-consideration of the divide between psychoanalytic theories and investigations into the paranormal and “telepathy.” Reasons for longstanding psychoanalytic resistance to the “uncanny” stem from the prevailing underlying material-based worldview purporting that “mind equals brain.” These concerns are reviewed along with common fears of the paranormal. The author suggests that clinicians’ ongoing effort to *consciously* engage with these fears will reduce the likelihood of such fears emerging in the consulting room in the form of *unconsciously* driven destructive “enactments.”

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

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

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

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

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

Christine A. Simmonds-Moore¹

¹*University of West Georgia
Carrollton, GA, USA*

ABSTRACT

Synesthetic experiences occur when there is an additional involuntary sensory or conceptual response (or responses) to an inducing stimulus. By convention, such experiences are described in terms of the relationship between an inducing stimulus (the inducer) and an additional response (the concurrent) (Grossenbacher & Lovelace, 2001). Previous research has indicated a relationship between synesthesia and a range of exceptional experiences (ExE), including experiences which have been labeled as paranormal. Some have proposed that synesthesia may actually underpin or play an integral role in these experiences (Alvarado, 1994; Irwin, 1999, Marwaha & May, 2015, Williams, 1997). Case studies have also demonstrated an association between synesthesia and other cognitive and perceptual advantages. This paper is a phenomenological case study exploring what it is like to experience the world synesthetically, and how synesthesia can inform our understanding of ExEs and abilities. This approach was adopted in order to generate a deep understanding of the experiential world of one person who reports experiencing synesthesia and ExE and abilities. The approach is neutral regarding the ontological status of these experiences. The participant is a 27 year old caucasian American male (participant A). A reports several synesthesias which have color as a concurrent. Grapheme-color synesthesia is characterized by letters being experienced as uniquely colored. A experiences colors for both individual letters and words. A also experiences several forms of sequence-color synesthesia, including time-color synesthesia whereby each day and month in the year have a unique color and music-color synesthesia where individual keys and notes have different colors. He also reports other higher level synesthesias whereby mathematical concepts and functions, songs and genres of music each have different colors. Finally, he experiences colors for the emotions of other people (akin to an aura experience). A also reports having an exceptional memory ability, a mathematical ability and has experienced both lucid dreams and precognitive dreams. A semi-structured interview concerning his experiences with synesthesia and ExEs was carried out in a quiet room on the campus of the University of West Georgia. The interview lasted approximately one hour. The interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed for its semantic content (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyze the transcript. The transcript was read through several times prior to analysis to become deeply familiar with A's experiences with a view to capturing meaning and implied meaning. The IPA resulted in the identification of 5 main themes, which can be summarized as: 1. Relationship with synesthesia; 2. Complexity/kaleidoscope of representations; 3. Access to meaning; 4. Control of synesthesia and manipulation of representations and 5. Exceptional abilities. In summary, A lives with multiple synesthesias which influence his conscious experiences, his dream life, his creative life and his interactions with social others. A's social experiences include experiences of color in musical improvisation, colors (auras) for the emotions of social others (experienced around their bodies) and precognitive dreams, which reflect the experiences of important social others. Such experiences have been part of his experiential world since he was a child and appear to be complex and interconnected. The synesthesias bestow an ability to represent (and access meanings associated with) subtle and abstract aspects of his lived experience. Although this research is neutral in terms of the ontological status of A's

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

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

Robert McLuhan¹
¹*SPR Council*
London, UK

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

<p>Session 3: Making sense of spontaneous cases Chair: (Richard Broughton)</p>
--

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

Mary Rose Barrington¹
¹*SPR Council*
London, UK

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Alan Murdie¹
¹*SPR Council*
London, UK

ABSTRACT

Despite extensive evidence from surveys and individual reports of the occurrence of psi phenomena beyond the laboratory in the wider world, such evidence is often dismissed as anecdotal. One justification provided for such sceptical rejection is that ‘extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence’ (Shermer, 1997).

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

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

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

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

Similar fact evidence recognises that human behaviour follows patterns. In particular, similar fact analysis often plays an important part in securing convictions in serial homicide cases where there are often no living witnesses except the killer. Without a confession there may only be a collection of

separated physical objects or traces, records and some isolated observations, or records of convictions for earlier crimes.

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

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

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

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

ROBERT L. MORRIS AND THE KOESTLER CHAIR

(INVITED ADDRESS FOR THE 2014 CAREER AWARD) [PA]

Deborah Delanoy¹

¹*Emeritus Professor, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

This talk will highlight the approach Bob Morris took to advancing parapsychology during the years that he held the Koestler Chair of Parapsychology in the Psychology Department at the University of Edinburgh (1985 – 2004). As such, it’s primarily aimed at the younger generation of parapsychologists, who may not have known Bob or be familiar with the Chair, except by reputation. Bob’s manner of interacting, both within the Psychology Department and the university at large, as well as with other universities and learned societies, will be considered. His main research interests will be briefly touched upon. But of primary concern is how he presented parapsychology to others and the strategies he adopted to advance the wellbeing of parapsychology. The personal attributes he brought to his role of being the

pre-eminent academic representative of parapsychology within Britain, if not within Europe, and arguably the world, will be considered. Also, the way in which he used his position to ‘normalize’ parapsychology and integrate it with other research areas so that it would be viewed as a valid domain of scientific inquiry will be discussed. It is probably too soon to judge the ultimate success of this approach. But it is hoped that this summary could assist future generations to better make this assessment, as well as perhaps providing some helpful guidelines to other parapsychologists with similar aims.

<p>Session 4: Methodological approaches Chair: Julia Mossbridge</p>

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

Hideyuki Kokubo¹, Yasuyuki Nemoto² & Kimiko Kawano¹

¹*International Research Institute*

Chiba, Japan

²*I.H.M. General Institute*

Tokyo, Japan

ABSTRACT

[Introduction] Liquid water is an important matter for all creatures on the earth. Practitioners such as qigong masters and healers often claim that liquid water can react against psi or ki (qi). One such claim is that the form of a water crystal can be changed by human intent. However, there are few scientific studies that have tested this claim. In the present study, the authors have improved the methodology of earlier experiments and tried to construct a new experimental system that has less ambiguity than previous systems. **[Issue]** The authors considered that the methodology should be improved regarding the following points: the viewpoint of judgment is changed from an aesthetic factor to a morphological factor; the task of the experiment is adjusted to judgment; equalization of the conditions of crystal formation by use of paired experimental and control samples; the estimation of the extent of crystal formation by blank tests; and the complete survey of all photographs. **[Hypothesis]** If an operator gives his/her intent to an experimental sample of water, aiming to form hexagon crystals, the extent of hexagonal crystals formed will be different between experimental and control water samples. **[Methods]** The operator was S017 (a 47-year old female) who was an expert healer but did not have any experience in water crystal formation tests. Bottled purified water (distilled water, 500mL) was used for the experimental and control samples and two pairs were prepared; each pair used two plastic bottles. Moreover, a blank test (without the operator) was done one day before each main test. 50 photographs were taken of the water samples prepared from each one bottle. So for each main test and each blank test, a total of 200 photos were taken for the samples prepared from the four bottles (two pairs of experimental and control sample bottles). The photographs were rated from a morphological viewpoint regarding the presence of water crystals by 18 to 20 students. The present study was done by a double-blind method. **[Results]** The number of photographs that included hexagonal crystals was not significant in the blank tests, while there was a significant difference in the number for the second main test ($p = 0.0095$, Fisher's exact test, two tails). **[Discussion and Conclusion]** The authors constructed a new experimental system considering the extent of natural fluctuation of crystal formation, and succeeded in obtaining data which were less ambiguous than those of the conventional method. The present study does not deny a possibility

that water crystal formation can be affected by intent. However, this possibility should be reconfirmed by more experiments, and the extent of natural fluctuation of the system should be estimated with sufficient accuracy.

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

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

¹*University of Amsterdam*

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

²*Beverly Hills, CA, USA*

ABSTRACT

Meta-analytic results are often cited as strong evidence of a paranormal anomaly with p-values in the range between 10^{-6} and 10^{-16} . We ran computer simulations to see if these experimental results could be explained by 6 applicable Questionable Research Practices (QRP's). Simulations ran in sets of the number of studies in the experimental meta-analytic database, with the sample sizes of actual experiments. Experimental results of the meta-analytic database are represented by 4 metrics. Two describe the dependent variable trial and mean experiment hit rates of around 31%, where 25% is expected by chance, one describes the correlation between sample-size and hit-rate and one describing the p-value distribution of the database. Employing a genetic algorithm (GA) to optimize the parameters describing the QRPs, the best fit was determined using a fitness function F, defined as sum of z^2 -scores for the 4 metrics. A good fit with the empirical database values was found using ‘QRP's only’. However the simulations for that ‘best case’ indicate an unreasonably high number of over one studies going into the file drawer for each published study and 1,47 subjects being removed in a biased way in *each* study. Also for each published study in this ‘best’ simulation, slightly less than one study was broken off prematurely, and disappeared because the results were below chance.

We therefore restricted the parameter space to more reasonable intervals based on values QRP parameters measured in QRP studies. Using these ‘reasonable’ regions in the QRP parameter space, an unsatisfactory best fit ($F=10.2$, $p < 0.05$) was obtained where about 55% of the anomalous extra chance scoring reported in the meta-analysis could be ‘explained’ away by the use of QRP's. Because the simulated data did still *significantly* differ from the empirical data we allowed for a ‘true telepathic effect’ free parameter in the interval from 25% to 31%. With a true psi hit rate of 27% the fitness became $F=1.8$ ($p=0.47$; where $F=0$ is a perfect fit) and simulation and experimental data were in very good agreement.

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

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

Peter Mulacz¹

¹*Austrian Society for Parapsychology and Border Areas of Science
Vienna, Austria*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Finally, one needs to distinguish between deliberate fraud that is planned well in advance on one hand and ‘unconscious’ fraud during trance, so-called ‘mixed mediumship’, on the other. An example of the latter is Eusapia Palladino, who clearly stated that during her trance the urge to produce the phenomena was so strong that unless her extremities were controlled by the sitters she would rather use *them* instead

of the obviously more demanding production of ectoplasmatic limbs. Mügge's case is quite different from that of Palladino; like the historic case of the 'flower medium' Anna Rothe, he features pre-meditated action undertaken prior to presenting 'phenomena' later during the séance. Rothe was observed buying flowers from the market that would later 'rain' from the ceiling as apports during the séance. Subsequently, she was put on trial and convicted of fraud. In Mügge's case, we have the fake cobwebs. *Where conscious and deliberate fraud occurs it is absurd to speculate whether some of the ostensible phenomena might perhaps be genuinely paranormal* (although the desire of some disappointed observers 'to save what can be saved' is psychologically understandable) and it is a waste of resources – time as well as money – to continue investigations of such pseudo-mediums.

ABSTRACTS OF FRIDAY 17TH JULY
Session 5: Experimental approaches 1
Chair: Mario P. Varvoglis

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

Göran Brusewitz¹, Adrian Parker², David Luke¹, & Annekatrin Puhle³

¹*Department of Psychology and Counselling, Greenwich University
London, UK*

²*Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg
Gothenburg, Sweden*

³*Independent researcher*

ABSTRACT

Parapsychological research into distant interactions between individuals seems to indicate that the bond between sender and receiver is important. The present study was designed to investigate the ostensible relationship between telepathy and attachment between twins. By applying the concept of attachment from developmental psychology, this becomes the first study in parapsychology to explore the degree of attachment between twins as a potential dependent variable relating to their apparent telepathic connection. At the current stage of evaluating a new methodology, we report the design and findings of the pilot study. From an initial pool of thirty pairs of twins, four pairs of identical twins were selected on the basis of their responses to the *Exceptional Experiences Questionnaire* and on the basis of the availability of both twins to take part in the study. The test procedure required each of them to alternate in the role of sender in which they were exposed to a shock or surprise stimuli and in the role of receiver in which they were physiologically monitored for their electrodermal responses (EDR). Senders were presented with altogether five stimuli, one stimulus during each of the five trials per twin session. For each trial, the stimulus was presented during a 30 second period randomly chosen from eight possible such epochs composing in total four minutes. With a further 30 seconds added to establish baselines before and after each session, this meant each session would last five minutes. Graphs from 19 of the useable sessions belonging to 3 pairs of twins were analyzed by the lead researcher (GB), who was blind to the time epochs in which the stimuli had been presented by the researcher working with the senders (AP). An independent evaluation of the EDRs from the EDR, in this study used for the receiver was carried out by the designer of the equipment. The task here was to identify a peak of the graph in the receiver's reaction which might approximately correspond to the midpoint in the period the stimulus had been presented to the sender. In four sessions out of the 19, these identifications corresponded to the actual exposure period for the shock or surprise stimulus – constituting so-called “hits”, compared to the MCE = 2.375. Although this fails to reach significance, $p > .05$, three out of these four correct placements were contributed by just one of the twins. The attachment data that twins contributed via the EEQ questionnaire indicated that all the twins in the current study seemed to experience similar high levels of attachment. This consistency in strong and close relationships meant of course there was a lack of variance as concerns the hypothesis that attachment would predict the scores. The results of the *Experiences in Close Relationships – Revised* (ECR) indicated that all the twins had very low scores on attachment-related anxiety and avoidance in their relationships. The profiles of twins having many hits in

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

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

Thomas Rabeyron^{1,2}, & Olivier Charlet¹

¹ *Université de Nantes*

Nantes, France

² *Koestler Parapsychology Unit*

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

ABSTRACT

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

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

Chetak Nangare¹

¹ *University of Pune*

Ganeshkhind, India

ABSTRACT

This study is an “A Comparative Study among Vipassana meditators and non-meditators on the Weird Coincidences Scale – 2.” Participants (30 Vipassana meditators and 30 non-meditators) completed the Weird Coincidence Scale – 2 by Coleman & Beitman, 2009. Research on the Weird Coincidence Scale - 2 was aimed at determining if there existed a difference between the two groups under study, i.e., Vipassana meditators and non-meditators. Weird Coincidences was the variable measured. The result

obtained showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups. Since this author predicted as such, the formulated hypotheses were supported. Hence the conclusion reached by the present study was that while weird coincidences commonly occur among the general population, there is an observable difference among the Vipassana practitioners and the non-practitioners, an observation which also opens up the possibility that an increase in the level of sensitivity for such experiences will emerge for those who exercise Vipassana meditation in practicum.

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

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

The hypotheses formulated regarding the variables of Weird Coincidences were all supported. To get the summary of interviews, in the online form of WCS – 2, I included the question of whether the participant believes in psychic powers or not. 28 out of 30 participants of Vipassana meditators group reported that they believe in psychic powers while 26 out of 30 individuals from the non-meditators group reported the same. It means that 54 out of 60 participants reported positive for this question. Thus, irrespective of meditative experiences and spiritual authority, people tend to believe in extrasensory experiences commonly.

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

Chris A. Roe¹, & Laura Hickinbotham¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

Recent research by the lead author has sought to incorporate ganzfeld stimulation as part of a remote viewing protocol. Initial research suggested that novice participants can successfully describe a randomly selected target location while in the ganzfeld (Roe & Flint, 2007). Subsequent replications compared ganzfeld performance with performance in a waking condition in a counterbalanced repeated measures design, and found that significant above chance performance occurred in the former but not in the latter (Roe, Cooper & Martin, 2010; Roe, Hodrien & Kirkwood, 2012). In those studies participants completed Pekala's (1991) *Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory* (PCI) in order to gauge their responsiveness to the ganzfeld protocol, and of the 12 sub-dimensions ganzfeld performance correlated significantly with greater absorption in their subjective experience, lower physiological arousal and less internal dialogue (Roe et al., 2010) and Time Sense (Roe et al., 2012). Additionally, suggestive relationships were found between dissociative experiences scores and ganzfeld condition performance ($r = .238, p = .078$), and between openness to experience scores and waking condition performance ($r = .269, p = .054$), but not

vice versa. The present study was an attempt to confirm those findings with a new sample of 30 participants and a new primary researcher (LH). Experimental trials consisted of two counterbalanced conditions as previously. Hit rate in the ganzfeld condition increased slightly to 43.3% (SOR z-score = 3.02, $p = .001$) whereas performance in the waking condition was at chance levels (HR = 26.7%, SOR z-score = .24, $p = .405$), confirming previous findings. However, we were unable to replicate the positive correlations between ganzfeld condition performance and PCI scores, nor previous correlations with scores on measures of openness to experience and dissociative experiences, although the association between openness to experience and waking condition performance was positive and of a similar magnitude to previous studies ($r = .203$, $p = .301$). In accounting for the failure to confirm a relationship between phenomenological shifts in conscious awareness while in the ganzfeld and performance at the psi task, the authors consider the possibility that success might have more to do with lab atmosphere, social interaction and excitement / expectancy rather than ASC induction itself. Future research is proposed that separates the elements of the 'classic' ganzfeld protocol into relaxation and sensory habituation elements to explore their relative contribution to success.

Session 6: Experimental approaches 2

Chair: (Bernard Carr)

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

Caroline Watt¹, Milan Valášek¹, & Emma Mark Donald¹
¹*Koestler Parapsychology Unit, University of Edinburgh
Edinburgh, Scotland*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

In 2010, Schredl, Götz, and Ehrhardt-Knutsen published in the *JSPR* a pilot study using an innovative variation upon Jackson's method. In Schredl's experiment, all participants were asked to dream about a

forthcoming target experience (a short film) and to keep a dream diary over the preceding week. At the end of the week, participants were randomly allocated to Group A or Group B, and each group viewed a different film. The film shown to Group A was labelled Film A; and Group B's film was labelled Film B.

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

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

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

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

Procedure, hypotheses, and analyses: Participants were asked to complete the adjective checklist to describe their dreams each morning for one week. They were told that their goal was to dream about the film that they would view at the end of the week. They were not aware that there were two possible films. Participants were allocated to groups, and after EM had collected all the checklists, she then randomly selected which film each group would be shown. We hypothesised that Group A would check a greater number of content variables associated with Film A, compared to Film B; and that Group B would check more content variables associated with Film B, compared to Film A. Logistic random-effects models (to account for statistical dependence since each subject contributed several data points to the analysis) were used to test these hypotheses.

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

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

Deborah L. Erickson¹

¹*Saybrook University
San Francisco, CA, USA*

ABSTRACT

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

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

The research completed 50 alleged telepathic animal communication sessions conducted by the researcher over the telephone with a human guardian and a domestic canine. All guardians and their canines were physically located in another city or state from the researcher. Five standard questions were asked of the animal, three of which were quantitative and rated by the guardian; the remainder of the session was devoted to the guardian's questions for their animal. The five standard questions were: 1) How many humans do you live with? 2) Have you lived with your current guardian since you were young? 3) What is your favorite food or treat(s) you get now? 4) What do you like most about your life? and 5) What would you like to change about your life?

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

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

than multiple breeds or “mix” in the description.) There were a total of 35 breeds or mixed breeds represented in the canine participant pool.

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

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

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

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

HEALING THE RIFT IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY: TURNING THE NON-CONSCIOUS/CONSCIOUS GAP INTO A COLLABORATIVE HANDSHAKE

**(INVITED ADDRESS FOR THE 2014 HONORTON AWARD)
[PA]**

Julia Mossbridge¹

¹ *Visiting Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, Northwestern University
Research Director & Owner, Mossbridge Institute, LLC
Visiting Scientist, Institute of Noetic Sciences*

ABSTRACT

There is a rift in parapsychology that is shared with all investigations examining the nature of mind and physical reality. We can only know what we observe with our conscious awareness, but we do most of the

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

Session 7: Survival and mediumship

Chair: (Alan Murdie)

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

Michael Potts¹

¹*Methodist University
Fayetteville, NC, USA*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

David T. Saunders¹, Rachel E. Evenden¹, & Callum E. Cooper¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

The first regards a recently obtained donation of paranormal research from a combination of several private collections, acquired by David Saunders and Callum Cooper (Cooper & Saunders, 2014). This donation predominantly comprised of several decades of material from the *Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena* (ASSAP) which Oxford University no longer wanted to house. The rest are personal collections, notes, letters, VHS tapes, and reel-to-reel and cassette audio tapes that were donated to CSAPP as a unified single donation. A considerable amount of the material mentioned is aimed at investigations of haunted properties (case files), electronic voice phenomena, psychic healing, theories of immortality and survival (predominantly from a Christian perspective) presented through psychical research organisations, plus sittings with mediums and a host of other material.

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

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

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

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

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of
Northampton
Northampton, UK*

²*Spiritualists' National Union, Arthur Findlay College
Essex, UK*

ABSTRACT

Stansted Hall was gifted to the Spiritualists' National Union by J. Arthur Findlay MBE in 1954 with the intention that the buildings be used to establish a "College of Psychic Science". Stansted Hall was named The Arthur Findlay College and has established an international reputation for its educational programmes in mediumship practice and philosophy. Despite spiritualism being among the most evidence based of the major religions, these programmes have not always sought to engender a scientific approach to the evaluation of empirical evidence gathered during mediumistic demonstrations. The President of the SNU, Minister David Bruton, has begun to address that shortcoming, initially by organizing a Science Day at the SNU's Arthur Findlay Centre in Stafford on 16th February 2013 that was intended to introduce the spiritualist community to the scientific research that has been conducted on the subject of mediumship and to suggest ways in which they might adopt a more scientific approach to their own practice and experiences. Contributors included Prof Chris Roe and Dr Elizabeth Roxburgh of the University of Northampton and Dr Matt Smith of New Buckinghamshire University. The event was extremely well received, with over 150 attendees providing very positive feedback. As a consequence, a Science Week was run at the Arthur Findlay College at Stansted Hall from 8-15th February 2014 that provided an opportunity for students to work with scientific methods that ranged from controlled experiments incorporating EEG measures to more qualitative but still rigorous approaches including surveys and questionnaires. A condensed workshop programme was run at the SNU's Stafford Centre on 20-22 February 2015, and plans are in place for a similar event in the Spring of 2016. The ultimate aim of these initiatives is to encourage collaboration between the spiritualist and scientific communities to further our understanding of the nature and phenomena of mediumship.

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

Funding has been secured from sources including The SPR's Survival Fund, the SNU's Friends of Stansted Hall, and the University of Northampton to furnish and equip the space so as to allow meaningful cutting edge research to be conducted by appropriate persons. Materials have now been purchased and pilot work is underway to test equipment and associated software to ensure fitness for

purpose. Permission has already been granted from tutors to recruit participants from among students attending residential courses at the AFC over the coming months.

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

INTRODUCING *PARAPSYCHOLOGY: A HANDBOOK FOR THE 21ST CENTURY*

**(INVITED ADDRESS FOR THE 2013 HONORTON AWARD)
[PA]**

Etzel Cardeña¹

¹*CERCAP, Lund University, Sweden*

ABSTRACT

In 1977, Benjamin Wolman published the *Handbook of Parapsychology*, a “state of the art” overview of the field. After almost 40 years, John Palmer, David Marcusson-Clavertz and I decided that it was important to come up with a new comprehensive and authoritative account of the current status of the field as well as provide the tools necessary for a new researcher or theoretician to initiate informed work on the area. Thus *Parapsychology*, an edited volume with contributions by many of the most important workers in the field. In this presentation I will introduce the main sections of the volume: 1) basic concepts (including terminology, history of the field since 1977, and the case for and against parapsychology), 2) research methods and statistical approaches (including basic techniques and more recent developments such as Bayesian analysis), 3) psychology and psi (including psychological theories of psi; the impact of states, traits and beliefs on psi; and meditation and psi), 4) biology and psi (including an evolutionary perspective, and drugs and psi), 5) physics and psi (including physical theories and physical correlates of psi), 6) authoritative reviews of research on anomalous cognition, perturbation, and force, 7) research on survival (including mental mediumship, reincarnation, and related phenomena), 8) research on psi in everyday life and practical applications, and 9) a summing up of the import of parapsychology to science in general and my personal reflections on the field.

<p>Session 8: PA awards and presidential address Chair: Deborah Delanoy</p>

A VIEW FROM THE ‘MAGIC HILL’
(INVITED ADDRESS FOR THE 2013 CAREER AWARD) [PA]

Eberhard Bauer¹

¹*Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health
Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany*

ABSTRACT

The topic of my talk is dealing with my long association with the “Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) [Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Mental Health] which was founded in Freiburg i. Br. (Germany) in 1950 by Hans Bender (1907-1991), professor of psychology including border areas of psychology at Freiburg University and the Doyen of academic parapsychology in Germany after the WW II. In 1967 I started as a student collaborator and later, after I’ve had finished my psychology study at Freiburg University, as Bender’s scientific assistant at the IGPP which was located at that time at the address “Eichhalde 12” in Freiburg – therefore called “Eichhalde Institute”. In a sense, this institution was Bender’s most personal creation. For decades it represented in the Federal Republic of Germany an unrivalled center for parapsychological research, information and advice, inspired by the tireless efforts of its founder. Quite a number of active parapsychological workers in Germany and abroad in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s got their first impressions of serious psi research by visiting Hans Bender’s Freiburg Institute. An endless stream of visitors from all over the world was full of praise for the hospitality of its director and the beautiful location of the Institute overlooking the Rhine valley (I mean the river Rhein, of course). Bender used to speak of the place where he had erected his Institute as the “Magical Hill” (*“magischer Hügel”*). Among the visitors whom I’ve met in the years to come were mediums and magicians, astrologers and ufologists, dowsers and numerologists, witches and healers, gurus and charlatans, spiritualists and hostile sceptics, psychotics and serious scientists; classes of students, TV teams and hard-nosed journalists - they all came to Freiburg to see and to talk to the famous professor and to learn more about the “border areas” of science. Since its foundation, the IGPP has provided the public with an information and counseling service covering the whole spectrum of parapsychology, fringe sciences and anomalistic phenomena, summarized under the neutral term “Exceptional Experiences” (ExE). This includes information and material about the distribution and phenomenology of psychic experiences together with expert knowledge regarding the state of the art of interdisciplinary research related to border areas of psychology and anomalous phenomena. A special counseling program of the IGPP is designed to meet the individual needs of individuals who have to cope with “occult”, supernatural or paranormal experiences causing them and others emotional distress (“mental hygiene”). In the early nineties, with the decisive help of new funding means coming from the private Munich “Holler Foundation”, for which Hans Bender was responsible, the IGPP could expand and restructure its scope of activities considerably. In the years to follow the Institute became one of the biggest research and funding organizations in the field of parapsychology and anomalistics. It has maintained close collaborations and ties with major parapsychological research centers in the world. In 1996 the IGPP has left the old building at ‘Eichhalde 12’ and moved to new and modern premises in the center of Freiburg at ‘Wilhelmstrasse 3 A’. The actual mission of the IGPP can be described as systematic and interdisciplinary research concerning insufficiently understood phenomena and anomalies at the frontiers of current scientific knowledge.

These include altered states of consciousness, exceptional human experiences, mind-matter relations, and their social, cultural and historical contexts from the perspectives of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. About twenty scientific staff members are currently active at the IGPP. The Institute runs also a special library comprising more than 60,000 volumes which form part of the main library of the University of Freiburg. The library subscribes approximately 260 journals, magazines and newsletters from all over the world. In addition, there is an archive focussing on all those materials (pictures, slides, films, tapes, manuscripts, letters, personal files) which may be of importance for cultural and historical aspects of both the reception of German parapsychology and of the Institute itself. In my talk I'll give an overview on the recent developments and projects done at the Institute.

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

PSI IS NOT A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANOMALY (PA PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS) [PA]

James C. Carpenter¹

*¹President of the Parapsychological Association; University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill; & Rhine Research Center*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

ABSTRACTS OF SATURDAY 18TH JULY – MAIN ROOM (A)
Session 9A: Paranormal beliefs and individual differences 2
Chair: Christine Simmonds-Moore

UFO PHENOMENA AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY: A CASE STUDY [PA]

Jean-Michel Abrassart¹

¹*Catholic University of Louvain*

Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

ABSTRACT

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

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

Ross Friday¹, & David Luke¹

¹*University of Greenwich, London, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

The ability to detect attention has previously been restricted to the psychic staring effect, also known as *scopaesthesia* - a phenomenon in which people respond via non-conventional means to being the subject of another persons' gaze (Sheldrake, 2003). However this new investigation will further the research by

incorporating the sense of being *heard* as well as seen, which we call *acoustasthesia*. The existence of these abilities will be gauged by the accuracy of participant's reports of being watched and/or listened to, differences in their behaviour during surveillance, and physiological reactions determined by electrodermal activity (EDA) which measures the electrical conductance of the participant's skin to indicate arousal. All participants' will have the opportunity to detect being watched and/or listened to via all of these methods in a randomly assigned order.

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

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

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

Jürgen Kornmeier^{1,2}, & Gerhard Mayer¹

¹ *Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health, Freiburg, Germany*

² *Eye Center, Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

- Memory content on a very long time scale: faces are the earliest, most frequent and the most important objects to look at in our life.
- Social context on an intermediate time scale: influence of current media coverage (e.g. the report about a 13 cm large mummy, found in the Mexican Atacama desert about two months before the occurrence of the strange object).

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

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

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

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

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

Ann R. Winsper¹, Paul Rogers¹ & John E. Fisk¹

¹*School of Psychology, University of Central Lancashire
Preston, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

Study 1: The *Paranormal Investigation Experience Questionnaire* (PIEQ) was devised to evaluate experiences of EVP and devise a measure of "EVPness" – a measure of people's belief in, and experience of, EVP. Participants were also asked to complete two measures of paranormal belief, a personality scale, an afterdeath belief scale, and basic demographic details. It was predicted that EVP believers (EVPers) would score more highly than non-EVPers on the measures of paranormal belief, life after death, and the Openness personality factor.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Session 10A: Workshop historical collections

Chair: Eberhard Bauer

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

Eberhard Bauer (chair)¹, Renaud Evrard², Gerd Hövelmann³, Wim Kramer⁴,
Michael Tremmel⁵, & Sergii Vakal⁶

¹*Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene e.V.
Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany*

²*University of Lorraine; Center for Information, Research, and Counseling on
Exceptional Experiences, Nancy, France*

³*Hövelmann Communication, Marburg, Germany*

⁴*Het Johan Borgman Fonds, Utrecht, Netherlands*

⁵*Bender Institute of Neuroimaging, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany*

⁶*Ukrainian Center for Parapsychological Research; ESC Institute of Biology,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine*

The importance of preserving historical collections including special libraries and archives for the social and cultural history of early psychical research and parapsychology – the “cultural memory” of the

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

1- LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS AT THE IGPP FREIBURG, GERMANY [PA]

Eberhard Bauer¹

ABSTRACT

The IGPP, founded in 1950, has a long tradition in building up and maintaining an international library on psychical research, parapsychology and border areas of psychology including archival and other collections dealing with the history of German psychical and anomalistic research. Its holdings, comprising more than 60.000 volumes, belong to the University Library of Freiburg. In collaboration with the University Library, the IGPP has started to digitalize selected German journals relevant for the history of early psychical research and parapsychology in order to make them available via internet.

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

Renaud Evrard²

ABSTRACT

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

3- TWO PRIVATE ESTATES, IMPORTANT TESTIMONIA OF THE HISTORY OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN EUROPE [PA]

Gerd Hövelmann³

ABSTRACT

The bequest of the Dutch skeptic and very nontypical CSICOP representative Piet Hein Hoebens (1948-1984) and the scientific estate of the not-quite-so-skeptical believer in spirits, the spiritualist Emil Prince zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg (1824-1878), could hardly be more different. And different these holdings are in many ways, beginning with the sad (Hoebens) or the unexpected and ludicrous (Wittgenstein) ways that both holdings got into my custody and care. However, there is one respect in which both “collections” are similar: Preserving these important materials for future generations is posing

the very same problems in both cases; these are mainly due to lacking funds for professional archiving and digitization. Both collections currently are in satisfactory physical condition, but their future and their competent scientific appraisal are not sufficiently secured. This short paper will show relevant examples from both collections – such as Hoebens's substantial correspondence with Eric J. Dingwall or Wittgenstein's detailed protocols of spiritistic sessions with Florence Cook ("Katie King") and other mediums – and emphasize their worthiness of protection and security.

4- PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF DUTCH PARAPSYCHOLOGY AS INTEGRAL PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCES IN THE NETHERLANDS [PA]

Wim Kramer⁴

ABSTRACT

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

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

Currently we are processing archives of the Dutch SPR and other parapsychological societies in Holland, the former Parapsychology Laboratory of Utrecht University and the very large collection of the Dutch psychic and healer Gerard Croiset. This archive also includes a substantial amount of international correspondence of missing person cases and chair tests. Next to this we have about a dozen smaller archival collections that need to be indexed. In March of this year we handed over a significant archival collection on parapsychology in general including a substantial amount of books and journals and three artifacts to the ADNG, a scientific collection on the history of the social sciences supported by several Dutch universities and professional societies. In June 2014 we organized and hosted the international conference Preserving 'Historical Collections of Parapsychology' (PHCP) in Utrecht, the Netherlands (see: www.hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl).

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

5- DIGITIZING THE *JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY* [PA]

Michael Tremmel⁵

ABSTRACT

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

6- PSIHUB – A PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL DATABASE [PA]

Sergii Vakal⁶

ABSTRACT

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

<p>Session 11A: Historical approaches Chair: (Donald West)</p>
--

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

Alma López Vale¹

¹*FPI-UNED, Philosophy Department
Granada, Spain*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

HAVELOCK ELLIS’S INVOLVEMENT IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH [SPR]

Callum E. Cooper¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

Few people today are familiar with the name Havelock Ellis, and yet over a hundred years ago were his name to be uttered in public it was well-known in a mixed light. He was considered by many people a bad influence on society by writing so openly and often on the psychology of sexual behaviour, and became arguably the most prolific writer within psychology on the nature of sex and sexuality. He was a qualified medical doctor through St’Thomas Hospital Medical Scholl – now part of King’s College London – and held a small practice at his home in Brixton where his patients would write to him or visit regarding a number of sexual problems for which they required therapy or to understanding more about themselves from the leading expert.

Ellis’ most noted works are his six volumes on *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (published between 1897 to 1928), in which a variety of topics regarding sexual behaviour were discussed. Included within these infamous volumes was a devoted section to “The Psychic State in Pregnancy”, found within volume five. The majority of Ellis’ books concerned sex, but he also produced various other titles, including an interesting examination of dreams in 1911 entitled *The World of Dreams*. Within this, Ellis also demonstrates openness to psychical phenomena through the discussion of dreams involving interaction with the dead. This particular aspect of dreams was something that Carl Jung had also given attention to, regarding some instances of dreaming of the dead as genuine interaction with the surviving personalities

of deceased friends and loved ones. While Sigmund Freud remained hesitant in involving himself in psychical research, against the keenness of Jung, he nevertheless still dabbled with such ideas and published on aspects of extrasensory perception in relation to psychoanalysis. Ellis shared many letters with Freud, and during the time of Ellis, Jung, and Freud, psychical research was of wide popular interest. Despite professional discouragement from engaging in psychical research, it is no surprise that all of these figures at some point wrote on the topic. It is clear to see in the writings of Ellis that he never appeared to speak of psychical phenomena as anything particularly unnatural. His writings suggest that in our day to day lives psychical phenomena is played out all around us, and yet we are rarely conscious of that fact. Clearly, social stigmas regarding professional status and psychical research did not deter Ellis from freely expressing his thoughts on the anomalous side of human behaviour. His reputation – particularly within the public domain – was already viewed by many as founded on perverted thoughts and writings – rather than original psychological theories on human behaviour.

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

Erlendur Haraldsson¹
¹*University of Iceland*
Reykjavik, Iceland

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

Protocols were kept of each sitting of the Experimental Society, and 58 of them still exist in two books along with various notes, totaling 300 handwritten pages. These protocols are comparable to those written by William Crookes and the Earl of Dunraven on D.D. Home's sittings. In 47 of Indridi's ordinary

sittings 456 phenomena are mentioned, some described as occurring frequently. This amounts to at least 10 phenomena happening per sitting, sometimes over forty were recorded. Voices of deceased or unknown persons were recorded in 77% of the ordinary sittings. A few spoke in a language not known to the medium; French, Norwegian, Danish and Dutch. Next in frequency were inexplicable movements of objects occurring at 55% of the sittings. Raps or knocks were common (in 38% of the sittings), some of them made on demand. Also frequent was the experience of being touched or pulled as if by an invisible hand (36%). Light phenomena were common (28%) and came in different colors and shapes.

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

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

- Control personalities played important role in Indridi's mediumship, but little if any with Home.
- Indridi's séances were held in darkness or near-darkness but phenomena also occurred spontaneously in full light. Home's sittings were conducted in normal light. In this respect Home was unique among mediums.
- Indridi was in trance during his sittings and it usually took him a long time to wake up to normal consciousness. Home was sometimes in trance but often not, or in a very light trance.
- Communications with deceased persons/ spirits was much easier with Indridi, and mostly through trance speech, direct voice, or direct or automatic writing. With Home, communications were primarily through alphabet (planchette) or raps, seldom through trance speech and rarely through direct voice phenomena.
- With Home, communications or messages were short and telegram-style. They were generally much longer with Indridi and played a greater role. Failed séances, when nothing happened, were seldom with Indridi and more common with Home.
- There was a period of violent poltergeist assaults with Indridi, but none with Home although undesirable influences are mentioned.
- There were several cases of speaking in foreign languages with Indridi, but not with Home to our knowledge.
- Indridi's mediumship lasted for five years (1904-1909), Home's for 25 (1851-1876). Indridi died 28 years old and Home reached the age of 53.

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

Session 12A: Discussion on roads taken

Chair: James C. Carpenter

**PANEL DISCUSSION:
ROADS TAKEN – SOME CAREER PATHS IN
PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]**

James C. Carpenter¹ (Chair), Eberhard Bauer², Stanley Krippner³, Deborah Delanoy⁴, Mario P. Varvoglis⁵

¹*President of the Parapsychological Association; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; & Rhine Research Center*

²*Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene e.V.
Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany*

³*Saybrook University, CA, USA*

⁴*Emeritus Professor, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

⁵*Institut Métapsychique International
Paris, France*

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

1- I DID IT MY WAY – AUF DEUTSCH [PA]

Eberhard Bauer²

Abstract

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

confess that such a development is indeed a very rare event in the history of parapsychology, at least in Europe, perhaps containing the flavour of paranormality itself...

2- TWO BRANCHES OF THE ROAD TAKEN [PA]

Stanley Krippner³

ABSTRACT

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

3- A PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL CAREER – A LUCKY HAPPENSTANCE? [PA]

Deborah Delanoy⁴

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

4- PARAPSYCHOLOGIST, PRINCETON TO PARIS [PA]

Mario P. Varvoglis⁵

ABSTRACT

I'll be talking about the 4 key phases of my life in parapsychology :

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

5- CHASING A QUESTION [PA]

James C. Carpenter¹

ABSTRACT

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

ABSTRACTS OF SATURDAY 18TH JULY – SECOND ROOM (B)
Session 9B: Spiritual practices and paranthropology
Chair: Jack Hunter

ERNESTO DE MARTINO'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]

Giulio Caratelli¹, & Maria Luisa Felici¹

¹*Centro Interdisciplinare Ricerca Parapsicologica*
Roma, Italia

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Etzel Cardeña¹, Sophie Reijman¹, Cathrine Lawaetz Wimmelmann², & Christian Gaden Jensen²

¹*CERCAP, Lund University, Sweden*

²*Copenhagen University Hospital, Denmark*

ABSTRACT

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

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

Leo Ruickbie¹

¹*Society for Psychical Research
London, UK*

ABSTRACT

Magic has, in 'voodoo death', an established phenomenon with documented cases from across different historical periods and cultures. The medical model proposed by Cannon (1942) explained the observed effects by the action of the emotion of fear on individual physiology. Additional nuancing suggests that wider social forces are also involved. However, anomalous cases exist that do not meet the specific criteria of a psychosomatic or somatic response and instead invite parapsychological interpretation as evidence of distant mental influence, what is here termed psi-somatic effect. Taking 'voodoo death' as a case study, this paper asks 'what is the functional mechanism of magic?' Coined by Harvard physiologist Walter B. Cannon (1942), the term 'voodoo death' describes the widely observed phenomenon of death by 'magic', that is, by performative ritual action. Looking beyond supernatural explanations, Cannon concluded that this worked by profoundly affecting individual beliefs, attitudes and behaviour with fatal consequences. He suggested that 'shocking emotional stress' could in extreme cases lead to 'persistent excessive activity of the

sympathico-adrenal system' resulting in death. Curt P. Richter (1957) later proposed 'overactivity primarily of the parasympathetic system'. Drawing on new research, this paper will demonstrate that the phenomenon involves a wider set of relationships than a psychosomatic reaction, indicating additional and complementary sociosomatic or biopsychosocial (Engel, 1977) forces. Cannon, drawing on James (1905) and especially Warner (1937), recognised these additional conditions, but did not explicitly account for them in his physiological model.

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

<p>Session 10B: Discussion on paranthropology Chair: Serena M. Roney-Dougal</p>

PANEL DISCUSSION:
THE EMERGING FIELD OF PARANTHROPOLOGY [PA]

Serena M. Roney-Dougal¹ (Chair), Jack Hunter², Stanley Krippner³, & David Luke⁴

¹*Psi Research Centre, Glastonbury, UK*

²*University of Bristol, UK*

³*Saybrook Institute, San Francisco, CA, USA*

⁴*University of Greenwich, London, UK*

1- A BRIEF HISTORY OF PARANTHROPOLOGY [PA]

Jack Hunter²

ABSTRACT

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

2- EXPLORING THE APPARENTLY PSI-CONDUCTIVE BUT METHODOLOGICALLY ELUSIVE NATURE OF RITUAL PSYCHEDELIC USE [PA]

David Luke⁴

ABSTRACT

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

3- METHODOLOGY OF DOING PSI RESEARCH IN OTHER CULTURES AND THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL BELIEFS [PA]

Serena M. Roney-Dougal¹ (Chair)

ABSTRACT

Taking a parapsychology experimental procedure and adapting it to the culture in which one is working is tricky and takes time. The experimenter needs to live for a sufficiently long period of time with the participants in order to begin to appreciate their perspective and gain their confidence. The experimental methodological rigour needs to be maintained whilst one works within the participants' cultural experience. In my research in India with Yogis and Tibetans it took two years to create a procedure with which the participants were comfortable. An example from the yogic research: in the first year the students scored in the psi-missing direction. Discussions with them revealed that compliance is very important for students with a teacher. They knew that the hypothesis was that the swamis would score better and so they had unconsciously attempted to comply with this. Bringing this unconscious factor into the open resulted in chance scoring by the students in the following year – an improvement on the psi-missing.

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

flowers, e.g. sea anemones, and he immediately identified this as the target, since it was the closest to his meadow!

4- TWO MORE SESSIONS WITH AMYR AMIDEN, A BRAZILIAN CLAIMANT MEDIUM [PA]

Stanley Krippner³

ABSTRACT

In 1994, I was a member of an interdisciplinary team that spent eight days studying Amyr Amiden, a Brazilian claimant medium. During 20 sessions, 97 possible anomalous events were observed, 91 of which were rated "apparent anomalies" on the basis of a 5-point rating scale filled out by 3 members of the team. When the mean ratings per event were correlated with physiological and geomagnetic readings, 2 of the 10 correlations were statistically significant: elevated diastolic blood pressure and elevated geomagnetic activity (using the geomagnetic index for the Southern hemisphere). My follow-up visit the following year was marked by additional apparent anomalies as was an additional visit in 2014. One of the most unusual apparent anomalies was the sudden appearance of a pair of linked metal rings. Brazilian culture in general and Amiden's family background in particular were felt to be conducive to his behavior.

Session 11B: Theoretical approaches

Chair: David Luke

MICRO-PSYCHOKINESIS: EXCEPTIONAL OR UNIVERSAL? [PA]

Mario P. Varvoglis¹, & Peter Bancel¹

¹*Institut Métapsychique International
Paris, France*

ABSTRACT

Putative psychokinetic effects reported in association with RNGs are generally qualified as *micro*-psychokinetic, suggesting a distinction between large-scale or directly perceptible PK and extremely subtle effects which can only be inferred through statistical methods. Whether or not the distinction between micro- and macro-PK is justified, it has led to two divergent research strategies, especially with respect to the presumed agent or source of the effect. On the one hand, investigations of macro-PK have largely been based on an *elitist* approach, involving exceptional individuals (or exceptional circumstances, as in the case of poltergesists), micro-PK effects are assumed to be potentially widespread or smoothly distributed in the general population. As a result, micro-PK research has been frequently approached through a *universalist* approach, employing massive data collection from a large number of unselected subjects.

In this paper, we examine which of the two approaches seems most promising today, more than 4 decades after the launching of microPK research with RNGs. We examine two contrasting testing strategies: that of Helmut Schmidt, whose approach is highly personalized and reminiscent of elitist research with small numbers of selected individuals; and that of the PEAR lab whose 12-year benchmark study was based on a highly standardized protocol involving nearly 100 unselected

subjects. Together these two bodies of research constitute a substantial portion of the entire micro-PK literature and thus afford a good approximation to the issue examined.

Helmut Schmidt, who is rightfully considered the "father" of micro-PK RNG research, was a highly prolific investigator and produced by far the strongest and most consistent results in the field. In our review of his work we found 22 experimental publications containing 50 independent studies, of which 3/4 reported significance ($p < .05$) and nearly half had z s above 3 (Varvoglis & Bancel, in press). We suggest that his striking success, over the course of about 3 decades, was due to four factors: subject selection, on the basis of pretests and other criteria; a strong role in engaging and motivating subjects; a willingness to adjust protocols and sessions to subjects' needs; and, most likely, a good deal of micro-PK skill of his own.

The Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) laboratory, founded in 1979 by Robert Jahn, was committed to a strict universalist approach, involving volunteers whose participation depended essentially on their own availability and willingness, and a progressive accumulation of data using the same protocol over many years. Each experimental run consisted of three separate PK efforts of equal length, and corresponded to the subject's intention to bias RNG outputs to go high (HI-aim), to go low (LO-aim), or to remain even (Baseline or BL aim). The experimental hypothesis was that the HI runs would give a positive deviation from the mean and the LO runs a negative deviation; the statistical test was based on the difference of the two directional runs.

The 12-year benchmark experiment collected over 2.5 million experimental trials from 91 participants, equally distributed across HI, LO and BL conditions. At its termination, the experiment had attained high significance, yielding a z score of 3.8 (Jahn, Dunne, Nelson, Dobyns, & Bradish, 1997). The result is particularly noteworthy insofar as PEAR had a firm policy of publishing all its experimental results in either refereed journals or publicly accessible internal reports, thus ensuring that this database can be considered free of publication bias and file-drawer problems.

A large-scale replication was undertaken by a Consortium involving two German laboratories plus PEAR itself. A power estimate was derived from the effect size obtained by the benchmark study, and over the course of 3 years, the three labs ran a total of 227 subjects, each lab collecting 750,000 trials that were equally distributed across the three conditions (HI-LO-BL). Given the power of this study, the primary hypothesis, involving a significant difference between HI and LO scores, should have had an 85% chance of succeeding at a p value level less than .01. However, the effect size was nearly an order of magnitude smaller than expected and the overall z score came in at a nonsignificant 0.6. While the combined PEAR + Consortium results were still significant, with a z of 3.2, the apparent failure to replicate a solid and well-founded prediction, despite a well planned collaborative study, remained quite surprising.

We believe that the reason for this apparent failure to replicate was in fact quite simple : the replication over-estimated the true effect size of the PEAR benchmark study, and thus grossly underestimated the power needed to replicate. A close look at the PEAR benchmark study shows that there were two extreme outliers in the participant pool who contributed nearly a quarter of the total data and who each obtained highly significant personal z -scores (5.6 and 3.4). This resulted in their contributing more than half of the total HI-LO deviation. It is easy to see that they are not representative of the 89 other participants as the overall z of the remaining database is only 0.8. Indeed, if we exclude these two outliers, and focus on the database of the 89 remaining participants, we obtain nearly the same effect size and z score as in the Consortium replication.

We conclude that the PEAR/Consortium studies, give rather weak support to the universalist assumption. They instead point to the wisdom of an elitist approach: working intensively with a few subjects rather than teasing extremely weak effects out of unselected volunteers. Coupled with Schmidt's success, these data suggest, as a working hypothesis that micro-PK is *not* widely distributed but rather exceptional, and that investigators should adapt their research strategies accordingly. This means using widespread pretests to select potentially promising subjects ; adopting flexible testing conditions, and ensuring that subjects are motivated and engaged ; exploring optimization techniques which may enhance scoring (just as "noise-reduction" techniques seem to enhance ESP scoring); and closely study and model the experimental style of highly successful investigators such as Helmut Schmidt and others, so as to better understand the dynamics of psi-conducive research.

SYNCHRONICITY AND PSI: A CONTROLLED COMPARISON [PA]

John Palmer¹

¹*Rhine Research Center
Durham, NC, USA*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

There was a significant positive correlation between synchronicity hits and the average difference between the hit and miss trials in how long participants waited for the “right time” to access the target message on the synchronicity task. Frustration was also offered as the explanation for this result: When the internal signal to click the mouse to access the target did not come quickly, participants became impatient and this negative mood state caused them to miss the target.

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

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

ARE DIFFERENT STANDARDS WARRANTED TO EVALUATE PSI? [PA]

George Williams¹

¹*Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC, USA*

ABSTRACT

Throughout the debate on psi, skeptics have almost universally insisted on different standards for evaluating the evidence. Empirical evidence supporting various categories of psi has grown to include meta-analysis, based on studies conducted in diverse laboratories. Despite this growing empirical evidence that would likely receive widespread acceptance except for its controversial nature, mainstream acceptance has remained elusive, perhaps in part because of arguments that claim conventional rules of evaluation are insufficient. Relatively little in the literature, however, considers the possible harm to the integrity of scientific investigation from this resulting inconsistency and ambiguity in testing standards. Further, we might question what exactly the word ‘controversial’ entails at this stage in our scientific inquiries, when theories involving multiple parallel universes or sentient computers are mainstream. This raises the question: exactly what theories or scientific understandings justify dismissing or discounting the psi data?

I argue here that a policy of consistent standards of evaluation should be the rule, not the exception, in order to maintain the integrity of scientific investigation. Of course exceptions must be allowed, but only under conditions where the evidence or hypothesis under test conflicts with strong consensus

theories that are well grounded in established scientific facts. In this paper I use a modified Bayesian framework that requires explicit description of background information and underlying assumptions to analyze aspects of the psi debate. Recently Bayesian models have been used to analyze the evolution of scientific theories, where a paradigm or meta-theory supports and constrains research in the manner described by Kuhn. Within this Bayesian context, I explore a likely paradigm or meta-theory used by skeptics that typically constrains research away from accepting psi evidence. However, it appears that such a paradigm or meta-theory (as well as similar ones) would in many respects have difficulty accounting for consciousness, which of course is fundamental to an understanding of psi.

There is a growing consensus that the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology currently on the books cannot yet account for subjective experience. Given this hard problem of consciousness, a growing number of scientists and philosophers are considering more radical alternatives to conventional theories of consciousness. Thus there is no consensus theory of consciousness, grounded in physics that can be used to disregard data gathered under carefully controlled conditions. In addition, advances toward building a theory of consciousness will likely require data gathered through objective methodologies while also allowing for consciousness anomalies to some degree. The psi data therefore fulfills a vital need to help us understand the nature of consciousness.

Session 12B: Discussion on practical applications

Chairs: Patrizio E. Tressoldi, Julia Mossbridge, Thomas Rabeyron

**PANEL DISCUSSION:
PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF PSI [PA]**

Patrizio E. Tressoldi (chair)¹, Julia Mossbridge (chair)², Thomas Rabeyron (chair)³, Anabela C. Ventura⁴, Flavio Burgarella⁵, & EvanLab Team⁶

¹*Dipartimento di Psicologia generale, Università di Padova, Italy*

²*Visiting Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, Northwestern University*

Research Director & Owner, Mossbridge Institute, LLC

Visiting Scientist, Institute of Noetic Sciences

³*Université de Nantes, France, and Koestler Parapsychology Unit, University of Edinburgh, Scotland*

⁴*LIMMIT- Laboratory of Mind-Matter Interaction with Therapeutic Intention*

Faculty of Medicine of University of Lisbon, Portugal

⁵*Cardiac Rehabilitation Center Bergamo, Italy*

⁶*Firenze, Italy*

**1- THE MANY ADVANTAGES OF PRACTICAL
APPLICATIONS FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGY [PA]**

Julia Mossbridge², Thomas Rabeyron³, & Patrizio E. Tressoldi¹

ABSTRACT

In their recent paper “Future directions in precognition research: more research can bridge the gap between skeptics and proponents”, Franklin, Baumgart and Schooler (2014), stated: “the most

convincing demonstration would be to show tangible effects applied in real-world settings. If a paradigm can make accurate predictions about events that people consider important and are incapable of predicting using standard means, then the significance of the paradigm becomes self-evident". In this panel we will address this point by presenting different practical applications across multiple fields.

2- BUILDING A SMARTPHONE APP FOR PRESENTIMENT EXPERIMENTS: RESULTS THUS FAR AND LESSONS LEARNED [PA]

Julia Mossbridge²

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

3- PSI APPLICATIONS: CAN WE TAKE CONTROL OF PSI? [PA]

Thomas Rabeyron³

ABSTRACT

Even if several meta-analysis have produced significant effect size of psi in controlled conditions (Bem & Honorton, 1994; Mossbridge, Tressoldi, & Utts, 2012; Storm, Tressoldi, & Risio, 2010), we still don't understand precisely its ontological nature and psi remains an elusive phenomenon (Kennedy, 2003). Consequently, mainstream psychology does not consider the existence of psi as being proven (Wagenmakers, Wetzels, Borsboom, & Van der Maas, 2011) and significant progress

does not seem possible as long as a scientific theory of psi won't be proposed. Such a theory would need to improve the reliability of psi effect and help to understand its biological and physical underlying processes. But several epistemological and empirical obstacles have prevented so far such an aim.

One of these obstacles is the influence of the experimenter: as soon as we suppose the existence of psi, there are no clear boundaries between the experimenter and his object of study. Consequently, we can hardly know if the results we obtain are a reliable characteristic of psi phenomena or a psi influence from the experimenter beliefs and expectations (Schlitz, Wiseman, Watt, & Radin, 2006). Thus, even if some results seem plausible [e.g. sheep-goat effect (Lawrence, 1993), noise reduction model (Storm et al., 2010), etc.], the psi experimenter "breach" prevents solid progress as in other scientific fields. A second obstacle concerns the ontological nature of psi phenomena. Psi is a complex problem that probably needs, in order to be solved in details, to first work out other complicated problems, like, for example, the relationship between the mind and the brain. Billions of dollars have been expensed in this domain without a clear success and psi researchers, with few resources, will probably have difficulties to put a real input in this domain. Consequently, they won't be able to solve the psi mystery as long as clear progress in other fields of research won't be achieved. A third obstacle is a more sociological one: Science usually needs social implications in order to be integrated and developed in a social environment. As long as psi only proposes strange anomalies without clear implications, funding and progress will continue to be scarce.

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

4- INTENTION AND BRAIN-TO-BRAIN COMMUNICATION WITH NON-INVASIVE TECHNIQUES [PA]

Anabela C. Ventura⁴

ABSTRACT

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

5- HEART-BODY-MIND CONNECTION AT A DISTANCE AS A POTENTIAL NEW FORM OF COMMUNICATION [PA]

Flavio Burgarella⁵ and Patrizio E. Tressoldi¹

ABSTRACT

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

6- CARDIO-ALERT AND MIND-SWITCH, TWO PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF PRESENTIMENT AND PK PHENOMENA [PA]

Patrizio Tressoldi¹ & EvanLab Team⁶

ABSTRACT

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

Cardio-Alert is a portable apparatus that uses the heart rate (HR) measured 10 seconds before the presentation of two random events of different emotional content to help a participant choose a good option or avoid a bad one. After the definition of the HR baseline, a threshold is set above and below it. When the HR before the presentation of an event exceeds the threshold, an acoustic signal informs the participant that a potential dangerous or advantageous event is going to be presented, allowing the participant to change his or her choice. The results of a first confirmatory study will be presented.

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

J.B. RHINE BANQUET

**THE FACES OF GOD: TABOO AND METAPHOR IN
VENTURING BEYOND PHYSICALISM
(J.B. RHINE BANQUET ADDRESS) [PA]**

Les Lancaster^{1,2}

¹*Professor Emeritus of Transpersonal Psychology,
Liverpool John Moores University, UK*

²*Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for Jewish Studies,
Manchester University, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

ABSTRACTS OF SUNDAY 19TH JULY
Session 13: Experiential approaches
Chair: (Chris Roe)

THE MEANING OF ECSTASY [SPR]

Richard Squires¹

¹*London, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

literal and primitive meaning understood by the Greek when he spoke of the ‘ekstasis’ of the soul in such orgiastic conditions of excitement.”

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

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

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

“O! O! O! They will all come, they will all come out clearly!”

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

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

Elizabeth C. Roxburgh¹, & Rachel E. Evenden¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

participants felt their counsellors were not accepting of their experiences or neglected to explore the cultural and spiritual aspects of the experience (Taylor, 2005).

The aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of clients who report AEs in secular counselling services so we are better informed about how AEs impact on mental health and how therapists have responded to such clients (e.g., What experiences have clients found helpful or unhelpful in terms of therapeutic intervention? Did they feel listened to and understood by their therapist?). Ethical approval was obtained from the School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee and ethical guidelines of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) were adhered. Semi-structured face to face interviews were conducted with eight clients (three males and five females aged between 21 and 52 years with a mean age of 37 years) whom had experienced at least one AE which they had discussed in counselling. A thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was applied to the data and produced four themes: “You have to go digging to get support”, “Why are you looking at that airy fairy crap?”, “It kind of shut the door”, and “Having someone to normalise and say you’re not crazy, you’re not weird”. Findings highlight the importance for clients of finding an open-minded counsellor so they can explore the meaning of the anomalous experience without being ridiculed or pathologised. Themes will be represented by participant extracts to demonstrate how they are grounded in the data and findings will be discussed in terms of their implications for the therapeutic relationship, the accessibility of mental services to meet the needs of diverse clients, and the growing field of ‘clinical parapsychology’.¹

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

Lesley-Ann Smith¹, Callum E. Cooper¹, & Jonathan T. Ryan¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

Lab based experiments carried out by Sheldrake and colleagues have indicated empirical support for the psi hypothesis, with findings of above 40% success when 25% was the mean expected chance score (Sheldrake, Godwin & Rockell, 2004). Independent replications have been less successful but have not refuted the original findings (Lobach & Bierman, 2004). Sheldrake has been critiqued for jumping hastily to conclusions supporting the psi hypothesis. Schmidt, Müller and Walach (2004) outlined Sheldrake’s weak experimental design which allowed for ‘sensory leakage’, arguing that in some cases participants began answering the phone before they had made a guess. Also, Sheldrake’s earlier non-videotaped trials (with no visitations from an experimenter) allowed the possibility for cheating to occur (Sheldrake & Smart, 2003b). Schmidt, Müller and Walach (2004) ran 397 trials, and after the methodological improvements were introduced they obtained a hit rate of only 26.7% which was non-significant ($p =$

¹ With thanks to the Bial Foundation Grant number: 108/12

.22). Thus, anomalous findings do not mean paranormal explanations, they may simply reflect experimenter effects and sensory leakage. Likewise, we have to tread carefully when drawing inferences between telepathy occurrences and evidence for psi. Emotionally bonded individuals although are mentioned in the literature to enhance telepathy, not all studies have found evidence for this (Moulton & Kosslyn, 2008). Telephone telepathy – despite scientific agreement on its ‘paranormal ontology’ – should be understood as an entirely real experience for the experient who interprets and reports the event. As researchers we need to treat the phenomenon of telepathy (and other forms of psi) as a ‘real experience’ when considering and interpreting our data.

In 2010 at the annual International Society for Psychical Research conference held at the University of Sheffield, an initial qualitative project regarding telephone telepathy was discussed, with data collection ongoing at the time of presentation (Roe & Smith, 2010). The study aim was to move away from the previous quantitative approaches of exploring the coincidental nature of “guessing who is calling” against seeing if scores can be presented beyond chance, to focusing on the circumstances surrounding telephone telepathy and the experient’s interpretations of such events. Sheldrake had asked participants questions about their experiences, but these were often closed questions, and did not vary from participant to participant. These qualitative data produced only a limited collection of responses. Such questions asked by Sheldrake provided restricted feedback into the real essence and insight of respondent’s lived experiences, and therefore such methods have faced criticism (Roxburgh & Roe, 2009; Smith, Harre, & Langehove, 1995). The present study adopted a qualitative design through conducting a series of focus groups. In total, 14 participants (13 female, 1 male; age range = 19-62 years) took part across 7 focus group sessions. Feedback was subjected to a thematic analysis.

In this talk, the initial findings will be presented focusing on themes of: identity, altered states of consciousness (in relation to psi conducive states), emotional attachment (between sender and receiver of the call), and evolutionary aspects and interpretations. Conclusions and alternative methods of analysis will be discussed.

Session 14: New beginnings

Chair: John Palmer

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

Walter von Lucadou¹

¹*Parapsychologische Beratungsstelle, WGFP
Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany*

ABSTRACT

On the basis of the Model of Pragmatic Information (MPI) and Generalised Quantum Theory (GQT) an experimental method (CMM) has been developed, in which the well-known decline effect of parapsychological experiments and their problem of repeatability are at least partially avoided by circumventing the non-transmission axiom (NT) of GQT due to a correlation-matrix technique. With this method many psychological variables are measured simultaneously before the start of a PK experiment and afterwards they are correlated with many physical variables of a physical random process which are also measured simultaneously during the PK experiment. This is done in two different settings, namely with feedback and without feedback (control). Only the number of (significant) correlations between

psychological variables and physical variables of the PK experiment are counted and compared with controls (runs without feedback or runs without subjects). Five independent studies support the assumptions of MPI and GQT that psi is no signal but a non-local entanglement correlation. It is argued that the results of many previous psi experiments which started from the classical Rhinean signal-model can be understood along the outlines of CMM.

EXAMINING WHAT COGNITIVE MECHANISMS MAKE SPONTANEOUS POST-DEATH PHENOMENA THERAPEUTIC FOR THE BEREAVED²

**(INVITED ADDRESS FOR THE 2014 SCHMEIDLER AWARD)
[PA]**

Callum E. Cooper¹, Chris A. Roe¹ & Graham Mitchell¹

¹ *Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of
Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

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

However, following the Rees (1971) study, which was the product of a medical doctoral thesis, a respectable number of studies have followed since then regarding the nature and impact of post-death encounters on the bereaved, predominantly in the form of doctoral theses (to cite a few: Burton, 1980; Conant, 1992; Drewry, 2002; Knight, 2011; Parker, 2004). Most the previously conducted studies have focused on qualitative designs to investigate the nature of such experiences, their influence, and their interpretation by the bereaved. Such studies have found consistent themes of: relief, joy, forgiveness,

² I would like to thank the Society for Psychical Research and the Alex Tanous Foundation for Scientific Research for their kind financial support of this project. Additional thanks and gratitude go to the Parapsychological Association for presenting me with the 2014 Dr Gertrude Schmeidler Award (Callum E. Cooper).

love, healing and hope – the latter of which has been casually expressed in various ways by both participant and researcher, in their experiences and conclusions.

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

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

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

Chairmaine Sonnex¹, Chris A. Roe¹ & Elizabeth C. Roxburgh¹

¹*Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes, University of
Northampton
Northampton, UK*

ABSTRACT

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

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

to warrant further study (Astin, Harkness & Ernst, 2000; Byrd, 1988; Roe, Sonnex & Roxburgh, 2015; Sicher, Targ, Moore & Smith 1998).

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

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

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

ABSTRACTS OF POSTERS

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES (OBES) AND BODY OWNERSHIP ILLUSIONS – A PHENOMENOLOGICAL OVERLAP?

Alexander De Foe¹
¹*Monash University*
Melbourne, Australia

ABSTRACT

Given the rise in body ownership research in the recent decade (involving perceptual illusions such as the Body Transfer Illusion: BTI), there has been growing confusion amongst researchers related to the phenomenological differences between traditional out-of-body experiences (OBES) and illusions of body swapping produced in the laboratory. Although some researchers have speculated on the theoretical differences between traditional OBES and experiences of bodily separation induced using a BTI, empirical research related to this question has not as of yet been conducted. In light of this, the present study endeavors to clarify the differences between traditional OBES and participant experiences with a BTI, specifically. In the present experiment, 15 participants took part in a BTI and were asked to describe their experience in detail. Participants in the same sample were then asked whether they had ever experienced an OBE prior to partaking in the research. Participants who answered ‘yes’ to this question were asked to evaluate the similarities and differences between their experience of the BTI and their prior (anecdotal) OBES. A basic textual analysis was conducted on the data, which revealed that although all 5 of the participants that had prior OBES noticed some similarity in their experience of the BTI (when recollecting their prior OBES), in that their sense of body ownership was transferred to some degree, there were also significant differences in their accounts. These 5 participants noted that their prior OBES were more realistic, tactile, and visceral than their experience of the BTI. In light of these initial findings, it is advised that researchers abstain from conflating BTIs with OBES, and thus, it cannot therefore be argued that the BTI is a sufficient condition for inducing a traditional OBE (as some researchers have previously posited). Despite this conclusion, questions regarding realism and immersion in body ownership illusions are well worth considering in future research. In particular, the implications of a more realistic BTI illusion (an illusion which could produce a similar sense of bodily separation and embodiment to a traditional OBE with the aid of advanced virtual reality [VR] simulations) are considered. A call for clearer definitions of traditional OBES more a generalized definition of body ownership illusions is made towards the end of the paper. Ongoing research should continue evaluating the differences between varied illusions in which one’s sense of body ownership is manipulated (whether this transfer in ownership is brought on via self-induction, or in a laboratory trial).

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

Marcelo Eremián¹

¹*Centro de Investigación de Fenómenos Anómalos
("Anomalous Phenomena Research Centre")
Basque Country, Spain*

ABSTRACT

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

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

Renaud Evrard¹

¹*University of Lorraine; Center for Information, Research, and Counseling on
Exceptional Experiences
Nancy, France*

ABSTRACT

The intersection between psychology and psychical research attracts the interest of many historians. Most of them have observed that this fertile intersection was gradually replaced by a *demarcation* between an *official orthodox scientific psychology* and a *marginal heterodox pseudo-scientific parapsychology*. Unfortunately, many historians described this demarcation as an irreversible fact, a sign of scientific progress. I analyze this demarcation through a symmetrical approach of the history of

parapsychology and I suggest a tentative model of six functions of heterodoxy. Three of them are said “negative” and the three other “positive”, and they all are more or less “progressive” or “regressive”. They are applied on three aspects of science: *knowledge, practices, and domains*.

These six functions are: 1) *Scarecrow*: Several historians already suggest that creating such a heterodoxy was a great help in enhancing the recognition and professionalization of modern psychology. Methodological pitfalls of parapsychology served as an inverted model for psychology. 2) *Control group*: For some counteradvocates, the results of parapsychologists can’t be positive, therefore all the successes indicate the existence of gaps to fill. Methodological and analytical requirements always increased and allowed parapsychological controversies to advance science as a whole. 3) *Sweep vehicle*: following examples like lucid dreams or other anomalous experiences, it seems that parapsychology retrieves the “objects” that psychology doesn’t want or can’t handle, until it is able to do so. Heterodoxy seems to be the marginal laboratory installed in the border areas, where intermingles rejected and premature knowledge. 4) *Subversion*: Among its positive functions, the heterodoxy would be there to challenge individuals, to test the supposed acquired knowledge, and to destabilize the dogmas in order to encourage scientific progress. Many parapsychological issues are now hot topics in psychology and science as a whole, like decline or experimenters effects. 5) *Touchstone*: Research in heterodox areas is relevant to test the strengths and shortcomings of available scientific methods from other orthodox fields. At a personal level too, to be confronted with heterodoxy would be an “excellent training”, a touchstone, for the formation of scientific thought. 6) *Pathfinder*: The most progressive function of heterodoxy would not situate parapsychology as a field of knowledge as such, but as the front line of the orthodox domain, as the scientific study of all anomalies.

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

YOGA: SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION AND EXTRAORDINARY POWERS [PA]

Maria Luisa Felici¹, & Giulio Caratelli¹

¹*Centro Interdisciplinare Ricerca Parapsicologica
Roma, Italia*

ABSTRACT

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

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

The yoga defined by Patanjali is also called the yoga of the eight steps, necessary to achieve realization and truth, and a yogi or yogin is the disciple following such discipline. The yoga philosophy puts as background above all the knowledge of the nadis and chakras. The former are very subtle channels

present in the whole human body. Inside the nadis an energy, the prana, flows, but generally it is not consciously perceived. The point in which two or more nadis join generates a centre of cosmic energy called a chakra.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gerhard Mayer¹

¹*Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health, Freiburg, Germany*

ABSTRACT

The field of present-day anomalistics is dealing with a wide range of topics and specific questions that are controversial, or at least difficult to access, both due to theoretical and methodical reasons. Therefore, these topics are mostly excluded from mainstream science. They include extraordinary experiences of

everyday life (e.g. near death experiences or crisis telepathy), altered states of consciousness (like ecstasy or religious trance), unexplained natural phenomena (e.g. ball lightning or mysterious Earth sounds), complex phenomena and other events of unclear or disputed origin (e.g. ghost apparitions, crop circles or UFO sightings) or even controversial cultural practices (ranging from astrology, alternative techniques of diagnosis and healing, to dowsing) – all in all phenomena and experiences at the borders of our seemingly well-grounded reality.

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

The anthology is supposed

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

The volume is aiming at a *broad* academic audience, and, furthermore, at lay people who are interested in the research fields and broader issues of anomalistics in general.

It is divided into three parts: (I) Historical development and theoretical debates (7 chapters); (II) Fields of Research (22 chapters); and (III) Methodology and Methods (6 chapters). In addition, it includes an introductory chapter as well as a subject index.

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

DIGITIZING THE *JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY* [PA]

Michael Tremmel,¹ Ulrich Ott,^{1,2} Eberhard Bauer,² Dieter Vaitl,^{1,2} Annalisa Ventola,³ & John Palmer⁴

¹*Bender Institute of Neuroimaging, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany*

²*Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene e.V., Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany*

³*Parapsychological Association, Columbus, OH, USA*

⁴*Rhine Research Center, Durham, NC, USA*

ABSTRACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sergii Vakal¹, & Igor Bombushkar¹

¹*Ukrainian Center for Parapsychological Research
Kyiv, Ukraine*

ABSTRACT

Background. The availability of comprehensive bibliographic databases and comfortable search engines is one of the most important factors determining information turnover within a field of study. For example, an implementation of Pubmed/Medline system manifold accelerated exchange of information

and knowledgeability of investigations of other researchers within the biomedical field. Currently there are no exhaustive publication databases indexing all known journals in the field of psi studies. The best among available databases are Lexscien and Scopus, but even they are not customized for parapsychology (although Lexscien deals with exploratory science). Moreover, none of available databases contain articles of journals printed in Russian, so Western researchers can hardly read classic and modern investigations performed on post-Soviet territory. Furthermore, non-English speaking researchers from Eastern Europe can not access a huge amount of data accumulated by Western parapsychologists. Here we describe our recent step towards the solution of above mentioned problems.

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

Methods. First of all, a list of professional parapsychological journals to be indexed was taken from a recent review of non-conventional periodicals written by Malakhov (2013). A list of additional relevant articles was formed on the basis of Hövelmann's (2009-2014) bibliographic summaries. In parallel, the electronic library with more than 5000 articles in the field of psychic studies was constructed and archived at the Ukrainian Center for Parapsychological Research. Russian articles were manually translated into English by the staff of our Center. Development of the site framework was performed on the basis of modified CMS WordPress during January-March 2015. Search builder (advanced search option) was created manually by basic PHP programming.

Results. A bilingual bibliographic database entitled 'Psihub' was developed and put online at <http://psihub.org/en/>. As of the end of March 2015, 357 abstracts were manually uploaded totally. The first version of the site contains abstracts to selected articles from *Parapsychology and Psychophysics*, the *Australian Journal of Parapsychological Research*, the *Journal of Parapsychology* and the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*. According to indexation plan, more than 1000 abstracts will be uploaded until the 1st of July 2015, and the whole library of the Center will be uploaded over the next two years.

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

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

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

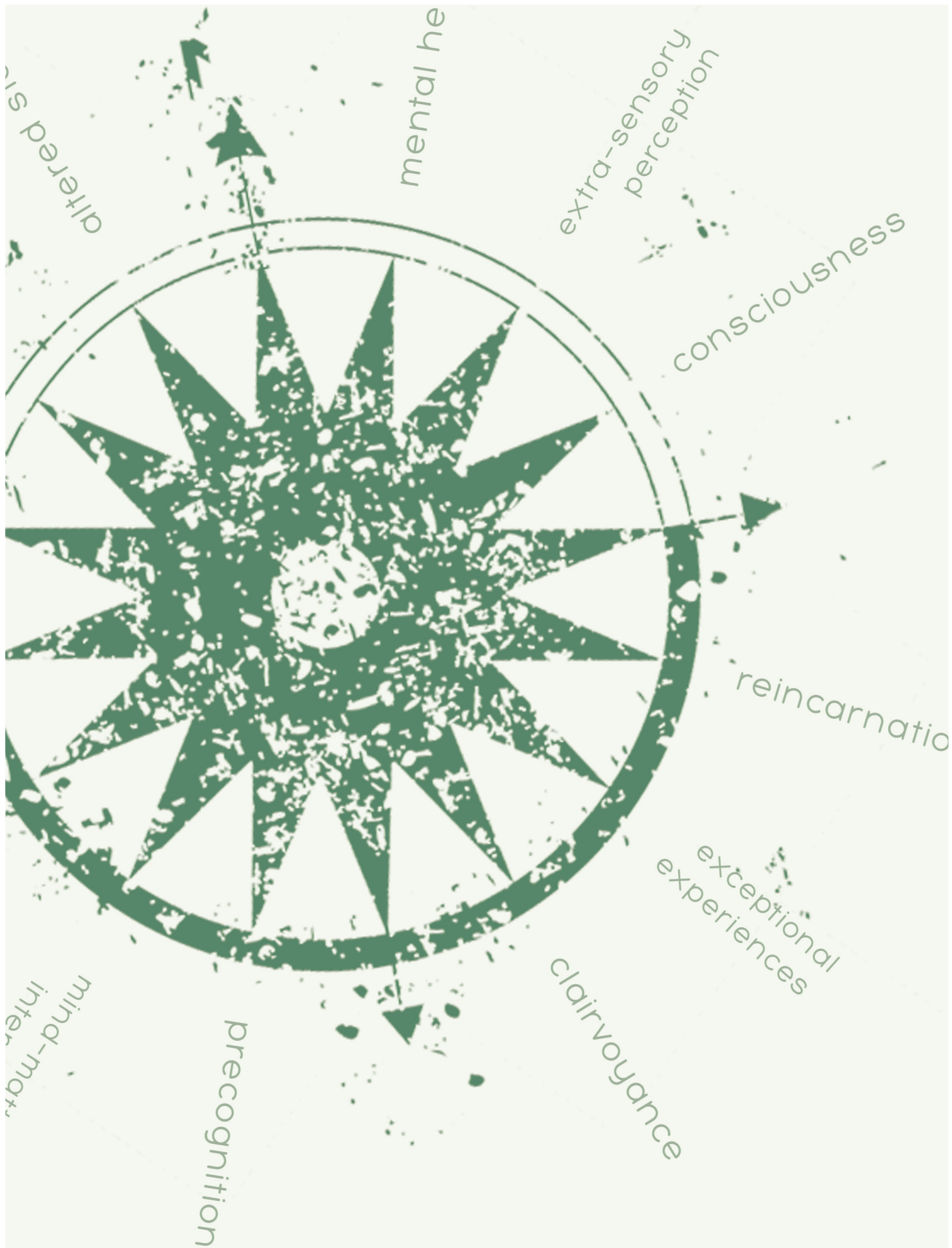
CONNECTING WITH THE DEAD: ASSESSING THE PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF SPIRITUALIST MENTAL MEDIUMS [PA]

Lauren Wellbourne¹, & Ciarán O’Keeffe¹

¹*Buckinghamshire New University
High Wycombe, UK*

ABSTRACT

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



altered states of consciousness

mental healing

extra-sensory perception

consciousness

reincarnation

exceptional experiences

clairvoyance

precognition

mind-matter interaction