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### FRONT COVER:

The Theta design by William G. Roll represents the first letter of thanatos (death) and theos (God), extinction and immortality. The symbol also reflects the yin-yang, passive-active, and ESP-PK aspects of human nature.

Established in 1960, the Psychical Research Foundation is dedicated to the exploration of the possible continuation after death of personality and consciousness. PRF research and educational activities include studies of expanded states of consciousness, out-of-body experiences, mediumship, meditation, and poltergeist and haunting disturbances.

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# Robert Ashby and the Super-ESP Hypothesis<sup>1</sup>

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*Mr. Tribbe is a retired U.S. government attorney who is active as a writer and lecturer on parapsychology, with a special interest in survival. He is Vice-President of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship and editor of its journal, Spiritual Frontiers. He recently published a book, Portrait of Jesus?: The Illustrated Story of the Shroud of Turin (Stein & Day, 1983).*

Robert H. Ashby got his training in psychical research during postgraduate study at Edinburgh University, through the Society for Psychical Research, and as Research Officer for the College of Psychic Studies, London, during his years as High School principal for the American School, also in London. From September 1971 until his death on August 22, 1975 he was Director of Research and Education for the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship. From his study and research Ashby ultimately came to the firm conclusion that the so-called super-ESP theory was untenable insofar as it was asserted in opposition to data supporting the claim of spirit survival of bodily death, especially since the super-ESP claim has never been supported by data. Unfortunately, Ashby died before his arguments could be formalized publicly.

In this paper I wish to set forth Ashby's views on the survival problem. The entire paper is either pure Ashby or Ashby-inspired. It is based on my extensive correspondence with him, on his files which I obtained from his widow, and on information from the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship headquarters and the SFF research chairperson who succeeded Ashby. I also worked from his handwritten notes, and from information I obtained from conversations with him or with others who knew him. Although the ideas set forth here are his, almost all the supporting data are mine.

The data from mediumistic communications provide the most common, and perhaps the most relevant, evidence for spirit survival. However, many scientists do not accept such evidence because of the alternative super-ESP theory. This theory presumes that if a fact physically exists anywhere on earth, or any living person has knowledge of same, it is more reasonable to assume that the medium obtained that knowledge by his or her own ESP rather than by communication with the claimed

spirit of a deceased person. The assertion of such skepticism is usually coupled with a claim of parsimony — that super ESP is simpler than the claim of spirit survival and is therefore preferable scientifically.

In a well-known psychiatric journal, Ian Stevenson (1977) called for a renewal of research on the survival problem (discussed below). In a subsequent issue three readers (Lief, 1977; Roll, 1977; Ullman, 1977) wrote letters endorsing Stevenson's call. This paper, in part, is a response to that call. I will survey the pros and cons in the literature in respect to the super-ESP theory, and I will reason that the theory should no longer be considered a bar to meaningful research.

The standard approach to the problem of survival by the super-ESP proponents is to state that clairvoyance and telepathy do occur, whereas we have no independent evidence for spirit survival of bodily death; ergo, although super-ESP has never been demonstrated, it *must* be the answer. This can also be termed the "eyes closed" approach, for one must refuse to look at the numberless cases of evidential mediumistic material and related data throughout history in order to be able to say that "we have no independent evidence for spirit survival of bodily death." Further, the survival skeptics must ignore the impressive apparitional data, which Professor Hornell Hart (1959) found to be very significant, as well as reincarnation and possession cases, communications, and physical phenomena such as phone calls, dictaphone communications, electronic

<sup>1</sup>An earlier version of this paper was read at the 1982 meeting of the Southeastern Regional Parapsychological Association at the University of North Carolina and was published in *Spiritual Frontiers*, 1982, 14, 33-38.

<sup>2</sup>I am indebted to Dorothy H. Pope and Laura A. Dale for research suggestions in developing this paper.

voice phenomena, materializations, and spirit photography.

As will be obvious, the survival skeptics espousing super-ESP are mostly parapsychologists and psychical researchers already committed (at least tentatively) to the probable existence of telepathy and clairvoyance. Initially, such persons challenged the early survival research on the basis of possible "telepathic leakage," but when later sittings and experiments were tightly structured and controlled to preclude such leaks, super-ESP was hypothesized as a fall-back proposition. Most present-day scholars credit the late Hornell Hart, a sociology professor and parapsychologist, with popularizing (if not actually coining) the term "super-ESP" in his book, *The Enigma of Survival* (1959). Hart cites the writings of Charles Richet which, as early as 1923, contained the thought but without the catch phrase, and the later writings of skeptics E.R. Dodds (1934), Antony Flew (1953), Gardner Murphy (1945a, 1945b, 1945c, 1948, 1957), and H.H. Price (1953), but acknowledges that while such views "are no more than guesses," they perhaps apply at least some of the time, at least in part. Hart concludes with a very involved philosophy that he calls the "persona theory" and describes it as a personality structure. This view, he suggests, accommodates super-ESP and yet validates survival — however, I know of no writer on the subject that he convinced. Hart ultimately voted for the reality of survival; nevertheless, his excellent summary of the super-ESP theory has had the effect of generating continuing support for it among the skeptics.

It may be worth noting that Gardner Murphy devoted an ASPR lecture to a discussion of Hart's book, and it was later published (Murphy, 1961). Murphy refers repeatedly to "what Hart calls the 'I-Persona,'" without himself taking a position for or against it. Murphy's paper was followed by a rather sharp reply from Hart, who wrote: "*The 'I-Persona' expression is actually Murphy's, not Hart's. The expression . . . which Dr. Murphy uses repeatedly . . . is actually a composite of two different concepts which must be clearly distinguished from each other if the analyses presented in *The Enigma of Survival* are to be understood in the sense which the author intended*" (Hart, 1961, p. 19). Thus, there clearly was no "meeting of the minds" on the question of Hart's persona theory.

Prominent philosopher C.J. Ducasse, in his book, *A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Life after Death* (1961), concluded that he had to agree with earlier giants in the field, such as Mrs. Sidgwick, Lord Balfour, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Hyslop,

and Dr. Hodgson, who had individually decided that the balance of the evidence was on the side of the reality of survival. However, Professor Alan Gauld (with A.D. Cornell), in the excellent volume, *Poltergeists* (1979), barely leaves open the possibility that such phenomena might be the work of incarnate entities. Both in Gauld's lecture to the Society for Psychical Research, "The Super-ESP Hypothesis" (Gauld, 1961), and in his chapter, "Discarnate Survival," in Wolman's definitive *Handbook of Parapsychology* (Gauld, 1977), his conclusion is that a "virtual stalemate" exists between the survival and the super-ESP theories (he takes no personal position). This seems to be a fair summation, since neither side has changed the attitudes of those on the other side. Gauld's chapter on survival does demonstrate the strength of the SPR's cross-correspondences as survival evidence, data which were much favored by Ashby.

Perhaps the latest professional handling of the subject appears in the article, "Research into the Evidence of Man's Survival after Death," by Ian Stevenson (1977), referred to above. He mentions the super-ESP hypothesis, but concludes that survival evidence is strong enough to *permit* belief in survival, but does not *compel* such a belief. In reporting his investigation of hypnotized subjects through whom an alleged deceased entity spoke in a foreign language not known to the subject (e.g., Stevenson, 1974), he makes the point (as had C.J. Ducasse) that speaking a foreign language responsively is a "skill" that must be learned by practice and cannot be transmitted by ESP, thus necessitating survival, plus either possession or reincarnation (in most validated cases). This is a point which no survival skeptic has attempted to answer, perhaps because of the several well-documented cases of extensive mediumistic communications in languages of which the medium had no earthly knowledge, conscious or unconscious (Bozzano, 1932; Kelsey, 1968; Stevens, 1945; Stevenson, 1974; Van Eeden, 1902; Wood, 1955).

Similarly, those who cite the super-ESP hypothesis as the explanation for survivalist data are the very ones who, with the shoe on the other foot, insist that theory must follow data — yet data never have been put forward as preliminary to the super-ESP theory.

In the few modern instances where super-ESP might plausibly be claimed, e.g., Uri Geller's ESP experiments at Stanford Research Institute — now SRI International — (Targ & Puthoff, 1977, Chap. 7); long-distance remote viewing at SRI International (Puthoff & Targ, 1976); Ingo Swann's (Swann,

1975) and Harold Sherman's (Sherman, 1981) reports of OBE or clairvoyance data of Jupiter, Mars, and Mercury months before the NASA Pioneer probes reached the planets; and Douglas Dean's plethysmograph experiments between New Jersey and southern France (Dean, 1966), very little notice has been taken of them in the parapsychological journals. (In fact, researchers Targ and Puthoff were only able to publish their results through their affiliation with the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers [Puthoff & Targ, 1976]).

In my judgment, the super-ESP theory is flawed, in that any statement of it must of necessity incorporate explicitly or implicitly the requirement that the medium provide an unconscious dramatization ability of the subconscious mind. H.H. Price (1959), particularly, considered he had proven the feasibility of super-ESP by citing the apparent ability of our subconscious minds to fabricate, during dream-time, such plausible fiction with no real meaning. Most of the proponents of super-ESP, as cited above, were writing before the era of modern dream research which began only eighteen years ago. With the body of knowledge now available from that source, it begins to become highly probable that such unconscious dramatization in dream production is *not* a fabrication, but rather may be a combination of higher-self guidance, innate therapy and catharsis, ESP, and communications *and visits* from entities who are incarnate, excarnate, and discarnate.

In the same vein, Paul Beard (1966) points out three serious weaknesses of the super-ESP hypothesis: (1) It offers no explanation of how the medium selects, from his omniscient resources, the particular items needed. (2) If the subliminal mind really does possess these very extensive powers, why have they not long since been discovered and harnessed to useful ends? (3) Why would not the subliminal mind *frequently* have some knowledge, however imperfect, of the *sources* of its information? Also, Beard reminds us, in the three best sets of evidence developed by SPR investigators (the cross-correspondences, the book tests, and the newspaper tests), not one research project was initiated by researchers, but all were suggested, designed, and carried out by the alleged communicators.

Similarly, C.J. Ducasse (1961) argued that it is one thing for a medium to obtain by super-ESP certain relevant items of *information*, but it is quite another matter for him or her to acquire parapsychologically the *mental abilities* or *skills* known to be characteristic of a deceased personality. The latter, he insists, has never been demonstrated in any

experimental context, whereas it is a striking feature of some of the more impressive survivalist evidence, especially of the celebrated SPR cross-correspondences where only one of the many independent automatists involved (Mrs. Verrall) possessed the classical scholarship that typified the alleged communicators.

It is worth mentioning at this point the views of some of the other present-day premier researchers (in addition to Beard and Stevenson) who find the survivalist view worthy of belief and/or active research. Gertrude Schmeidler (1979) succinctly says: "Must super-ESP always seem a reasonable alternative? I think not" (p. 14). "The super-ESP hypothesis," says Karlis Osis (1979), is "that strange invention which shies like a mouse from being tested in the laboratory but, in rampant speculations, acts like a ferocious lion devouring survival evidence" (p. 31). "The super-ESP hypothesis," says the Venerable Michael Perry, "argues for such fantastic powers in the living mind that human survival is thereby made more rather than less credible" (1981, p. 65). And John Beloff (1970), parapsychologist at Edinburgh University, without opting for the survival theory, nevertheless points out:

In appealing to the super-ESP hypothesis we must be careful not to abuse Occam's razor [the rule of parsimony, or simplicity]. Undoubtedly we should always aim to avoid if possible a multiplication of entities in science . . . . And, if the alternative is to stretch the *ad hoc* basis of our explanation beyond endurance, it may well be preferable to settle for the additional entities. Perhaps a parallel may be found in the field of nuclear physics. Nothing could be more offensive to the spirit of Occam than the proliferation of "fundamental" particles that has been such a notorious feature of modern nuclear physics. Yet presumably the physicists know what they are doing, and if extra particles are required in order to make intelligible their observations — in this case the visible tracks made by colliding particles — then they have no hesitation in postulating such entities. Parsimony is important in scientific theorizing, but it is not all-important; intelligibility is at least as important and, in certain circumstances, may have to take precedence. Hence, if by acknowledging the intervention of discarnate intelligences we succeed in simplifying or clarifying the existing parapsychological picture, then, as scientists, we would be fully justified in doing so. (p. 330)

In one of his last publications, J. Gaither Pratt (Hintze & Pratt, 1975) wrote:

Some parapsychologists go so far as to say that we should abandon all scientific effort on the survival problem unless we can rule out the super-psi hypothesis.

It seems to me that there is another choice open to us, one that is to be preferred because it offers a better prospect of achieving a significant advance in scientific knowledge. *Research effort should be increased when we are confronted with an "either/or" situation, and we should actually favor the more novel explanation, in this case the*

possibility of survival, during the evidence-gathering stage of the research. If as a consequence, the novel explanation should eventually prove to be the correct one, science would have benefited through our venturesomeness (p. 236).

My personal conclusions and beliefs on the question are doubtless clear by now, so I think it appropriate to give my good friend, Robert Ashby, the last word (based on the unpublished records in my possession). In response to Hart's (1959) explication of the super-ESP theory, Ashby countered:

In order to "explain" the cross-correspondences, one must suppose that the subconscious selves of the mediums concerned were engaged in a gigantic conspiracy to provide evidence for survival, and that some of the mediums had gained by paranormal means at least a slight knowledge of the languages with which they believed themselves to be unacquainted.

As to the Gaudl writings, Ashby commented:

Gaudl argues that Myers' "subliminal self" is an illogical construct which does not explain anything. Unconscious or subliminal motivation is invoked to explain an observable behavior, and later that same behavior is thought of as being caused by the unconscious. A peculiar type of circular reasoning is involved. Therefore, the "subliminal self" cannot be thought of as a scientific theory. Also, because the super-ESP theory is forced to invoke the "subliminal self" theory, it, too, must be thought unscientific, since it assumes communication between subliminal selves.

Ashby was well aware of the survival views of Dr. J.B. Rhine — of Rhine's early interest in survival, and his later determination that meaningful survival evidence could not be scientifically obtained (Rhine, 1956, 1971). In the summer of 1974 Ashby spent a very exciting (for him) day of wide-ranging discussions with Rhine at his Durham laboratory. Shortly thereafter Ashby wrote:

It is Rhine's point that while the thesis of super-ESP is damaging to the survivalist position, parapsychology, in demonstrating that there is a psi faculty (or faculties) that is non-physical, contrary to the rules of a physical universe, supports the postulate of a kind of consciousness which spiritist evidence indicates does survive. In short, parapsychology tends to the view that man is more than merely physical; and, if man is more, then physical dissolution of the body and brain would not necessarily mean the dissolution of the "I" that is the individual.

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# Meditation and Psi: Implications for Understanding Human Consciousness

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The belief that certain meditative practices induce altered states of consciousness and lead to the development of paranormal abilities is an ancient one. The spiritual systems of various cultures uphold such a notion, and in many scriptures we find a detailed description of the methods for attaining such states and powers (Tart, 1975). In order to learn the implications of an association between psi and meditation for understanding human consciousness we may look into some of those spiritual systems to which consciousness is the cardinal principle and meditation is the major method.

In this paper I shall attempt to briefly review research on psi and meditation conducted by the persons associated with the Psychical Research Foundation (PRF) and discuss implications for understanding human consciousness.

It was the Indian sage Patanjali, of the 2nd Century B.C., who first described the *siddhis* (paranormal powers) that emerge in the process of spiritual development and self-realization through the practice of yoga (Woods, 1927). Though a number of thinkers (e.g., Broad, 1948; Wilkerson,

1956) have advocated research on such claims, it was only in the 70s that investigators in the West turned their attention to Eastern practices such as yoga and meditation.

The first systematic study on psi and meditation was done by Gertrude Schmeidler (1970), now on the Board of Directors of the PRF. In this study, Schmeidler administered ESP tests to students both before and after a swami's lecture and instruction in meditation and breathing. The results indicated better and significant ESP performance of students after the swami's instruction.

The Psychical Research Foundation since then has contributed more to our understanding of the extrasensory aspects of meditation than any other single organization.

In the early 1970s, Hamlyn Dukhan of Trinidad, West Indies, who was a research associate of the

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PRF at that time, visited India and conducted systematic investigation of yogic meditation as related to paranormal abilities. He worked under the supervision of K.R. Rao in the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology at Andhra University. I was also involved with this project.

In three series of experiments we tested (Rao, Dukhan, & Rao, 1978) yoga practitioners of the Ananda Ashram of Swami Geethananda, at Pondicherry, and at Bangalore in South India, with ESP card and picture tests, just before and soon after they meditated, in a number of sessions over a period of time. The results showed better ESP performance by the practitioners after meditation on both the tasks, suggesting that yogic meditation facilitates psi.

Since the mid-1970s, Roll and his colleagues at the PRF have carried out a series of studies on various aspects of psi and meditation. They investigated experiential aspects of meditation by designing questionnaires which reflected the meditation experience. They compared different techniques like Eno meditation, Ganzfeld and hypnosis as to their psi-optimization effectiveness. They studied clairvoyance, telepathy, and remote viewing. In connection with these projects the PRF also offered short-term, non-credit courses on psychic development and altered states of consciousness. Most of these studies were presented at PA and SERPA conventions.

In their first study on the relation between Eno meditation and ESP, Roll and Solfvin (1976a) integrated the ESP test into the meditation experience itself. The subjects were the participants in a course on meditation and psychical development. They practiced Eno meditation while in the Ganzfeld and made an imaginary visit to the Eno river, eventually arriving at the ocean. The subjects were told that they would encounter various objects and animals along the way and were asked to record these after the session. The objects and animals were targets in a limited-choice clairvoyance test. After this session the subjects also took part in limited-choice and free-response GESP tests, where they had to receive an impression of a slide, of taste, touch, smell, or sound from one of the experimenters who was in another room. On the basis of the analysis of their data, Roll and Solfvin concluded that the "meditation items were related to the free-response GESP results and not to clairvoyance" (p. 97). However, their attempt to replicate this study in the same year (Roll & Solfvin, 1976b) was not successful. Two other studies, which also did not produce significant results, were reported by the PRF

group in 1978 (Solfvin, Roll, & Krieger, 1978). In the first, high school students who chose a mini-term course on psi and altered states of consciousness were asked to experience themselves what the agent located in a target area was experiencing after they had meditated for 20 minutes. In the second study, the same team compared Eno meditation, a combination of Eno meditation and Ganzfeld, hypnosis, and control conditions.

In 1980 and 1981, two more studies were conducted on meditators. The subjects in these studies were administered questionnaires to assess their feelings and the quality of their meditation. The ESP tests were embedded in the questionnaires and the subject's choice of place to answer each of the questions consisted of the ESP response. The ESP targets were of two types, group and individual. One set of targets was the same for all the subjects, while the second set varied from individual to individual. The hypothesis that meditation enhances group psi scoring and that there will be more psi scoring on group targets after meditation than before meditation was confirmed (Roll, Solfvin, Krieger, Ray, & Younts, 1980).

In the follow-up study (Roll, Zill, Hight, & Prather, 1981) meditators scored negatively on the individual targets (in one condition) before meditation and positively after meditation, with a significant difference between the two.

In India, Rao, Puri, and I have done some work on transcendental meditation (TM), ESP, and subsensory perception (SSP). Though our studies did not yield highly significant results statistically, they indicated that TM may facilitate the retrieval of both subsensory and extrasensory influences.

In our first study (Rao & Puri, 1978) we administered subsensory and ESP tests before and after the student subjects practiced TM for a week. Though meditation did not alter the performance on either subsensory perception and extrasensory perception, a post-hoc analysis utilizing variance scores provided some suggestive evidence that TM enhanced the ESP performance of the subjects who scored low on the subsensory task.

The second study (Rao & Rao, 1982) was conducted with two independent groups of subjects and indicated a positive correlation between SSP and ESP, which seemed to be triggered by the practice of meditation. Meditator subjects performed better than non-meditators on subsensory perception, though not on ESP.

Besides these studies, a number of other investigators have investigated psi and meditation and some of them have reported positive results. Hon-



orton (1977), who reviewed several of these studies, stated: "It appears that meditation is an effective means of producing controlled psi interactions" (p. 442). Rao (1979) noted, "Honorton's (1977) review of experimental studies bearing on psi and internal attention states in general and meditation in particular makes a strong case for a possible relation between psi and the control of attentional processes through such means as meditation" (p. 176).

Now if we turn to the implications: There are two Eastern schools — Samkhya yoga and Buddhism — which describe the relation between paranormal powers, meditation, and consciousness. Both these systems view the subject-object distinction as superfluous and consider ultimate reality to be one infinite boundless consciousness. The aim of meditation is to unveil and integrate into consciousness what is hidden from the senses and to attain the state of consciousness which is transcendental and divine in nature.

According to both these systems, in the process of spiritual development, i.e., on the way to supreme consciousness, paranormal powers are encountered as epiphenomena. They are regarded as invaluable indications or signposts of the spiritual progress of the practitioners. The disciples, however, are strictly advised to restrain from using these powers for personal gain, because such a use, it is believed, impedes progress toward attaining enlightenment, the experience that the human self is one with the universe. Those who failed to resist the temptation of using psychic powers were considered to have fallen from the path (Bharati, 1974). Both the systems thus regard the use of these abilities for personal purposes as diversionary in one's spiritual emancipation.

The *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali (Eliade, 1969; Woods, 1927) and the *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa (Goleman, 1975; Rao, 1978) describe, with subtlety, the varieties of human consciousness and the nature of experience in them. Paranormal experiences point to a metaphysical order that can be experienced in a state of consciousness attained by the prescribed methods of yoga and meditation.

Now, considering that the discipline of meditation as it was formulated and systematized in the ancient traditions was essentially a philosophico-religious method aimed at enlightenment and liberation, does the association between psi and meditation found in some parapsychological investigations imply that human consciousness may indeed be all-pervasive and that omniscience and omnipotence may be within human reach as expounded in these esoteric disciplines?

If the state induced by meditation is different from the states produced by other self-regulating or state-altering strategies, and if the alliance between psi and meditation is much more substantial than the association between psi and other altered states, then we may have some ground to entertain such a notion.

The empirical literature on meditation and other self-regulation strategies does not seem to suggest any major physiological or overt differences between meditation and other states (Shapiro, 1980). According to Shapiro, the phenomenological investigations are far from conclusive, and he suggests that the experiential aspects unique to meditation need to be further investigated.

If we compare the studies on psi and meditation with psi and other internal attention states such as Ganzfeld, hypnosis, relaxation, and dreaming, the strength of association between psi and meditation does not seem to stand out in any significant way. It is difficult at the present stage of our understanding to assert that the association between psi and meditation may imply more than simply the association of psi with internal states of attention.

Nevertheless, I think that the seeming independence of psi from sensory processes, space, and time and the general enhancement of psi functioning in internal attention states has implications for our understanding of human consciousness and the methodology of psi and altered states. Parapsychological phenomena may indeed be indicative of a different mode of interaction in altered states of consciousness. ESP in such states may present a reality which can only be grasped or understood in the states of consciousness unique to it. These realities may not agree with the reality experienced in ordinary states. Scientists who are engaged in the exploration of the psi realm may profit from investigating psi as a mode of cognition or action in altered states in the ways suggested by Tart (1975), White (1983), and more recently, Rao (1983). A science of psi, from the standpoint of consciousness, may be more effective if it includes an experiential approach and is not limited to an experimental one. As Tart (1975) and White (1983) suggest, we may proceed to create state-specific sciences and enrich our understanding of parapsychological phenomena by having earnest scientists or subjects enter into a certain state and upon agreeing with one another on their common attainment of the experiences related to psi, they may further proceed to working with them and systematizing them. Methods such as

meditation may provide maps of the realms of consciousness which may be transcendental in their nature.

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## Reviews

### PSYCHOKINESIS: A Study of Paranormal Forces Through the Ages

BY JOHN L. RANDALL

(London: Souvenir Press, 1982. 256 pp. £8.95, cloth.)

Reviewed by Stephen E. Braude

Dr. Braude is an Associate Professor of philosophy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He has written a book, *ESP and Psychokinesis: A*

Philosophical Examination (Temple University Press, 1980) and is working on another one on macro-PK. He has contributed articles and book reviews to the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research and Parapsychology Review* and has a chapter in *Concepts and Theories in Parapsychology* (Parapsychology Foundation, 1981).

Randall's new book, like his last, is written for the general reader. Most of the book is devoted to a survey of the non-laboratory evidence for PK, from antiquity to the present. Randall also discusses recent macro-PK "superstars" such as Geller, Serios, Silvio, and Kulagina, and devotes relatively little

attention to laboratory studies. His comparative neglect of laboratory evidence is due in part to his having covered that material rather fully in his previous book; but it results also from his desire to place that body of evidence in its proper perspective. Unlike many present-day researchers, Randall takes the non-experimental evidence very seriously, and considers it worthy of study and capable of surviving skeptical examination. The final portion of the book is a brief theoretical discussion, in which Randall sketches a theory of his own, and speculates on the relevance of recent developments in physics.

Randall's survey of historical evidence is smoothly written and generally fair. Although he discusses some controversial cases (e.g., Eusapia Palladino and Geller), he usually confines his attention to their least assailable aspects, and notes the reasons for controversy. Randall takes the sober (and, I believe, correct) view that an individual may produce both genuine and fraudulent phenomena, and that clear examples of the latter do not necessarily discredit the case as a whole. It is especially gratifying to see Randall defend the Serios case against the distortions and diversionary tactics of James Randi. For that matter, Randall exposes other inaccuracies in Randi's typically glib appraisals of work in the field (and some of Martin Gardner's as well). He even lists well-known magicians who have examined and endorsed the physical phenomena of mediums and more recent PK stars.

Randall also has the courage to defend the phenomena of Henry Slade and the work of J.C.F. Zöllner. I agree with him that both men may have been unjustly maligned. Still, even if Randall is correct in asserting that the Slade case and Zöllner have been treated superficially and unfairly, I felt he devoted too little space to the far more compelling case of D.D. Home. Perhaps Slade was (as Randall suggests) a medium of Home's calibre; but Home's phenomena are, on the whole, more fully and convincingly documented, and warranted a more detailed presentation.

The theoretical section of the book struck me as less satisfactory. Randall's views are generally very orthodox, and he perpetuates (see, e.g., p. 196) the standard mechanistic error (or at the very least, the undefended *assumption*) that all PK phenomena have an analysis on the micro-level.<sup>1</sup> He also commits the related error of assuming that the existence of psi must force a deep revision in our world view because current physics cannot accommodate it. Apparently, Randall (like many others) fails to recognize the conceptual errors underlying the attempted reduction or analysis of *organic*

*phenomena generally* into purely physical or non-intentional terms.

A similar problem afflicts Randall's positive theoretical proposals. He sketches a multidimensional theory of psi, whose physics I'm unqualified to judge. But his suggestions clearly leave untouched exactly the same aspects of psi ignored by all the current physics-based theories — namely, the relationship between a mental state and a change in the external world. Presumably, Randall thinks mental events are brain, or at least physical, events. For example, his somewhat naive comments on memory (p. 216) show that he thinks of memory on the clearly defective storage-mechanism model.<sup>2</sup> But Randall has nothing to say on the subject of how a mental event (whatever kind of physical event it might be) could trigger an extrasomatic (or, for that matter, intrasomatic) physical event. But this may well be the principal mystery of PK, as it is the principal mystery behind all organic intentional or cognitive phenomena.

In addition, Randall's proposals do not adequately address the connection between PK events and the psychological nexus of conditions responsible for them. In some instances, Randall tacitly assumes that a theory of PK must resemble scientific theories appropriate for mechanical systems or impersonal forces. For example, when he considers why PK phenomena seem so uncommon, he suggests that a *force field* keeps objects out of hyperspace. This claim simply fails to connect PK phenomena with the dynamics of the life situations in which they occur. If PK phenomena are, in fact, uncommon (or if *overt* phenomena are uncommon), this might plausibly reflect various facts about our psyches and our *needs* to keep the phenomena hidden. On this general topic, Eisenbud is far deeper,<sup>3</sup> and does not need to resort to *ad hoc* speculations. Randall does briefly discuss why we discount, run from, or simply fail to notice everyday psi. But Eisenbud's analysis is, again, deeper and more interesting (Randall should have mentioned it, in any case). Besides, Randall's suggestions are far too limited in scope,

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of this error, see S.E. Braude, "Taxonomy and Theory in Psychokinesis." In B. Shapin and L. Coly (Eds.), *Concepts and Theories in Parapsychology*. New York: Parapsychology Foundation, 1981.

<sup>2</sup>See H.A. Bursen, *Dismantling the Memory Machine*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978, for a lucid account of the defects of this model.

<sup>3</sup>See, e.g., his *Paranormal Foreknowledge: Problems and Perplexities*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1982 and his *Parapsychology and the Unconscious*. Richmond, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1983.

and apply at best only to certain segments of Western industrialized culture.

Randall also makes some other curious moves. For example, he omits materialization phenomena from his list of types of PK, on the grounds that the evidence for them is weak. I question whether the evidence for materializations is uniformly weak. For example, the evidence for Home's spirit hands or Palladino's heads and "stalks" seems to me to be quite compelling. In Eusapia's case, Randall mentions in passing — but then ignores — the good evidence obtained in the 1908 Naples sittings. Moreover, the evidence from the cases of Home and Palladino is at least as strong as much of what Randall endorses (e.g., some apport and auditory phenomena). And, of course, the rather good evidence for partial materializations can only strengthen the more controversial evidence for full-form materializations. Randall also maintains that materialization phenomena are more complex and resistant to classification than the other forms of PK. But this claim is far from obvious, and Randall offers no arguments to support it.

Even odder is Randall's assertion (p. 196) that it may be hasty to call poltergeist and mediumistic phenomena "RSPK," and thereby class them with (say) influence of falling dice or RNGs. I don't follow this at all; phenomena in each of those classes fit his own definition of "PK" and are discussed by him in his book on the subject. I doubt that lumping all the phenomena together as types of PK, simply through the use of the term "RSPK," is more theoretically perilous than discussing them all in a book on psychokinesis, or defining "PK" in such a way that all the phenomena fit the definition. It seems to me, in any case, that the term "RSPK" is relatively non-committal theoretically, and that it is an open question in parapsychology whether all PK phenomena are nomologically continuous (i.e., related according to the same fundamental laws).

Randall's book, therefore, seems strongest as a layperson's introduction to the history and varieties of PK, and is weakest in its somewhat trendy and confused theoretical excursions. But since the latter occupy a relatively small portion of the book, Randall's new work, on the whole, is a welcome addition to the popular literature of parapsychology.

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## THROUGH THE TIME BARRIER: A Study of Precognition and Modern Physics

BY DANAH ZOHAR

(London: Heinemann, 1982. 178 pp. \$8.50, cloth.)

Reviewed by Gertrude R. Schmeidler

*Dr. Schmeidler is Professor Emeritus at the City College of the City University of New York and a past President of the American Society for Psychological Research.*

This is a disappointing book. There is a gap in our bookshelves that it might have filled, because its intention is excellent. It attempts to describe three important topics in language so clear that any intelligent person could follow. The first of these topics, and the central one, is whether precognition occurs, that is, whether some of us, sometimes, paranormally foresee the future. The second, recurring throughout, and well handled, is a consideration of the questions that precognition raises, especially about the nature of time and whether with precognition there can also be free will. The third concerns the findings and theories of modern physics. These (the author argues) give us a view of time that can incorporate precognition into the body of modern science and also show that even with precognition there is room for free will. Because the evidence for precognition keeps growing, and because physicists keep modifying their theories, a good new book about time would indeed be timely.

But unfortunately this short volume (fewer than 167 text pages) cannot be recommended to either the interested layperson or the parapsychologist. It gives a great deal of accurate information but it uses the same confident tone to give misinformation. It omits much important material. It discusses some questions so well and makes some technical material seem so everyday and clear that a person who reads it might gain a feeling of understanding, but the understanding would be imperfect and would be especially incomplete on the topic that is of special interest to many of us: the findings of modern research.

The book begins with a short, provocative overview and then is divided into three major sections. The first (Is There Precognition?) opens with a delightful chapter on myths, legends, and early history. It brings together some prophecies we all have read in childhood, starting with Macbeth's witches, continuing with stories from the Bible, the

ancient Greeks and Romans, the Arthurian legends, Joan of Arc, and closes with Nostradamus and the *I Ching*. It includes many tales that I for one either never knew or had forgotten. It prepares us to turn eagerly to the next three chapters, which presumably will give us the careful, modern, scientific reports. These three deal with dreams, waking impressions, and experimental studies.

The chapters on dreams and waking impressions are likely first to interest and then to trouble the intelligent reader. We are told anecdote after anecdote about dreams that came true. But millions of us dream, and not all dreams come true. We begin to wonder if these selected cases show only the one in a million kind of coincidence that is sure to happen sometimes, just by chance. At first, too, we may be impressed at the extraordinary accuracy of some of the forecasts, but then wonder about this also. We all know that some people, when they have a good story to tell, make it an even better story by embroidering some parts and deleting others, inventing some corroborative details and conveniently neglecting what does not fit. We may wonder how many of these stories are authentic and how many have been imagined or improved.

The author only occasionally addresses these questions. Here is an example. Some half dozen of the precognitive experiences are taken from reports by Andrew MacKenzie, and we are told that he double-checked one of them. Zohar identifies him as a writer, but does not tell us what kind of a writer he is. Does he have scientific and professional credentials which should make us respect his reporting and his checking? Or is he an imaginative writer, who tells interesting tales that owe more to his creativity than to the raw material? We are left ignorant, although the author sometimes tells us elsewhere what reason there is to trust or distrust the accounts.

Consider our other doubt. A large proportion of both dreams and waking impressions dealt with accident or death, e.g., on the *Titanic* or in an air crash. Many of us feel anxious before we take a sea or air voyage, but many of the forebodings are followed by a safe journey. Is the proportion greater before tragedy, or is it the same before disaster and before safety? Until questions like these are answered we cannot take the collection of anecdotes as serious evidence of foreknowledge.

Doubts like these can be confirmed or dispelled by careful research, which notes the negative as well as the positive findings, and controls for the normal information that could logically make some forecasts correct. This means that the chapter called Experi-

mental Studies of Precognition should be the culminating, most satisfying part of this section of the book. Instead Zohar tells us in advance that experimental rigor is dull, and we soon find that the accounts are scanty and ill organized. We may have noted in passing that the chapter on dreams mentioned some waking impressions and that the chapter on waking impressions ended with a dream; in this one on experiments, three of the seven units do not give us experimental findings. (One describes a dream diary; one describes a fraud; one describes a summary of spontaneous cases.) The four relevant units are so briefly reported that they give little opportunity to judge either the elegance or the flaws of the experimental designs; the findings are not integrated; and the inadequate sampling seems haphazard.

The second section of the book is a melange. Its first chapter is Precognition in Animals. It gives us anecdotes, some carelessly and some carefully investigated, interspersed with myths of talking birds and such, from ancient times. The second chapter is called The Psychology of Precognition. It starts with an anecdote from Jung, then explains (as if this were known fact rather than a flight of fancy) the technique of meditation used by Neolithic shamans, then gives us more speculation, myth and folklore, then reports an experiment, then lists in full an unvalidated questionnaire, and stops. The final chapter is a short, sympathetic statement of Jung's theory of synchronicity, i.e., that events occur meaningfully together even though the events are not causally related.

The third major section of the book has many thoughtful and careful passages. Zohar here considers the difficult problem of what foreknowledge of future events implies about time. She describes some but not all of the relevant modern physical theories, dealing first with relativity and then with quantum mechanics, and she tries to make things easy for us who are not physicists by simple, humanized examples. She writes about how an electron may use its free will to choose an easy life for itself; and she writes that if similar events occur to identical twins, this is analogous to the correlated action of polarized photons. Some of us may not take well to anthropomorphic analogies like these, and even a nonphysicist like myself can spot some inaccuracies. An example is her statement on page 115 that Einstein showed how a set of events can be described in different sequences and that the sequence can be equally valid "provided that they are not causally linked" while on page 122, referring back to this, she forgets the proviso and writes that

"relativity theory . . . plays havoc with the causal laws."

Other misstatements abound, though perhaps each is trivial. On page 4, Louisa E. Rhine is cited as a typical "experimental researcher" (and her major work, including surveys and analyses of precognitive cases, is ignored). J.B. Rhine, on page 66 and elsewhere, is said to have found evidence for telepathy, although he argued for decades that he had not done so and that no experimental method presently known could do so. Zohar writes about an (oversimplified) relation of brain changes to higher states of consciousness but does not define consciousness-height, though she implies a definition by describing transcendental meditation as an example of the highest level and creative thinking as a lower level. She writes of "the fact that a single photon (quantum of light) will excite the optic nerve" (page 139) but "the fact" is that if this happens at all, it happens so seldom that even "may excite" could be controversial. In short, the book cannot be recommended for the serious reader, though it would be harmless for someone who goes through it casually, expecting to forget most of what was read.

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## ENCOUNTERS WITH PARAPSYCHOLOGY

EDITED BY R.A. MCCONNELL

(Pittsburgh: R.A. McConnell, 1982 [c1981]. 245 pp.  
\$9.00, paper. Single copies available from the  
University of Pittsburgh Book Center, 400 Fifth  
Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.)

Reviewed by John P. Bisaha

Mr. Bisaha is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Mundelien College in Chicago, where he teaches a course in parapsychology, and is Director of Corporate Planning and Marketing for St. Mary's Medical Center in northern Indiana. He is actively interested in providing scientifically accurate information about parapsychology to the public.

*Encounters with Parapsychology*, edited by R.A. McConnell, a biophysicist at the University of Pittsburgh and the first president of the Parapsychological Association, is an anthology of non-technical essays. Individuals both past and present

who have been actively interested in parapsychology are represented. This is the first volume of a three-part series to be published privately by Dr. McConnell after it was rejected by 29 trade publishers and 32 university presses.

William Barrett, eminent scientist and one of the founders of the Society of Psychical Research, is represented by excerpts from two documents: (1) on some phenomena associated with abnormal conditions of the mind; and (2) reminiscences shortly before his death. Three famous men influencing the history of psychology are included: William James, who writes about Frederic Myers' work on the subliminal; Walter Franklin Prince, who presents his important work, "The Doris Case of Multiple Personality" (it is this case which later made him give up his Episcopalian ministry and go into parapsychological research); and William McDougall, who, in his 1920 presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research, referred to a "Pandora's box" which has been opened by parapsychology.

Excerpts from *Mental Radio* by Upton Sinclair are found in a chapter which sets forth three years of experiments on telepathy with his wife as subject. Rosalind Heywood, the well-known sensitive, describes her experiences in growing up with ESP ability.

Of course, major emphasis is placed on the work of parapsychologists. Included are Gardner Murphy's "The Nonpsychological Processes of Parapsychology"; Louisa E. Rhine's "The Unconscious Nature of ESP and Psychokinesis"; J.B. Rhine's "Psychology and Parapsychology"; J.G. Pratt's "Some Notes for the Future Einstein of Parapsychology"; and Charles Honorton's "Parapsychology and the Mind-Body Problem."

Three more major areas are also represented: the physical sciences, with Henry Margenau on "ESP and Modern Physics" and Robert G. Jahn on "New Dimensions on Old Delusions"; parapsychology critics, by Ray Hyman's "Pathological Science: Towards a Proper Diagnosis and Remedy"; and the impressions of a Soviet scientist, L.L. Vasiliev, who writes about his seventeen years of research on hypnosis-at-a-distance.

Dr. McConnell ends the book by applying the cognitive-dissonance hypothesis to the conflicts of parapsychology. An extensive Appendix contains a reprint of a paper by McConnell and Clark, "Training, Belief, and Mental Conflict Within the Parapsychological Association," previously published in the *Journal of Parapsychology*, and an annotated sociohistorical biography of parapsychology. Thus

the works collected here present all aspects of the parapsychological spectrum.

Because of this and because of the arrangement of some of the selections, the book is rather disjointed, and in some cases, one must be aware of parapsychology from a historical perspective to extract the full value of the writings included. One part of the audience for whom this book was intended is supposed to be the busy scientist, but serious scientists would be rather disappointed by the lack of scientific evidence for or against parapsychology. McConnell states in the Introduction:

The present nontechnical book was prepared for educated laymen and busy scientists. In it there is very little direct evidence for the reality of ESP and PK — certainly none which would convince a skeptic. For that kind of evidence in a controversial field of science one must go to the professional journals and monographs. Rather, this book is offered as a guide for those who wish to grasp the scientific nature of parapsychology without examining the laboratory evidence. (p. 1)

In some cases, this book could become a focal point of attack in bolstering a belief in parapsychology without any empirical evidence. If one of the other volumes in the series successfully conveys the scientific evidence, McConnell will have a winning combination.

Dr. McConnell should be complimented, however, on publishing this book. For the educated layperson not experienced in statistics, it *does* succeed in presenting a valid representation of the parapsychological controversies without the popular “psychic garbage” of many other books. It would be an excellent book to give to the layperson or student interested in parapsychology. It would also be useful in the many introductory parapsychology courses in the United States. It is one of the few books for public consumption which treats the topic of parapsychology in an educated nonsensationalistic format. Because of this lack of popular sensationalism, it will never be among the best sellers, which is probably why the numerous publishers did not desire to print it. For those about to become acquainted with the work of parapsychology for the first time, and for use in initiating discussion on major parapsychological topics in the classroom, it is a highly recommended volume.

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## HAUNTINGS AND APPARITIONS

BY ANDREW MACKENZIE

(London: Heinemann, 1982. 240 pp. £8.50, cloth. North Pomfret, VT: David & Charles, 1983. \$18.00, cloth.)

Reviewed by Andrew Green

Mr. Green is a consultant in parapsychology to a number of British authorities and local government departments, teaches adult education classes in parapsychology, and has written several books on psychical research. His latest book, *Ghosts of Today* (1980) was reviewed in the Spring, 1982, issue of *Theta*.

The first of several books to be launched on behalf of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) to mark its centenary is this valuable work by a member of the SPR Council, who is also chairman of the Library Committee and an author of five other notable books on spontaneous psi phenomena.

In the early chapters MacKenzie examines and debates the question of the evidence for haunts and apparitions. He reevaluates the Census of Hallucinations conducted by Edmund Gurney in 1885 and published in *Phantasms of the Living* (Gurney, Myers, & Podmore, 1886). As an example of his approach in this book, in which he continually sheds fresh light on old material, he quotes from D.J. West's critical approach to Gurney's Census, in which West, in his book, *Psychical Research Today* (West, 1954), noted that “‘it amounts to an almost invariable law in spontaneous cases that the more remarkable the alleged coincidence the worse the supporting evidence, and conversely, the better the evidence the weaker the coincidence’” (p. 11). MacKenzie discussed this observation with West in 1981, and although West still has not changed his mind about the invariability of the law, he admitted that it did not mean he considered no case paranormal.

MacKenzie reviews several surveys of haunts and apparitions and in the light of the large number of cases of apparitions of living persons, suggests that the classification of apparitions proposed by Tyrrell (1953) be amended as follows: (1) Experimental apparitions; (2) Apparitions of the living; (3) Apparitions of the dying and those undergoing a crisis; and (4) Hauntings and apparitions of the dead.

Other chapters deal in depth with well-known cases of apparitional hauntings, such as that of the Morton ghost at Cheltenham, and present the

evidence in a new and enlightened fashion. The idea that the "woman in black" at Cheltenham, suggested by another writer to have been a living person (an illicit lodger, in fact), was utterly dismissed by Mrs. Sidgwick, who noted that it was seen to disappear through a closed door and it also passed through threads tied across a staircase without disturbing them.

An account of the apparent haunting of Beavor Lodge in West London is also given, and it provides an excellent opportunity to discuss physical factors which should be taken into consideration when assessing the factual nature of reports. An examination of two reports and some hitherto unpublished material relating to a haunted road in Roxburghshire, Scotland adds further to the overall value of MacKenzie's work.

What will no doubt prove to be the most popular case to be restudied in depth is the haunting of Versailles and the reports by the Misses Moberly and Jourdain. Research has shown that some features in the park which had not been physically there in 1901 had actually existed, not in 1789, the year of Marie Antoinette's last visit and around which the Englishwomen had based their investigations, but in 1770-71, a period well outside their calculations. The result is that what originally seemed a very doubtful case now appears to be very much stronger and an outstanding example of genuine retrocognition. Another fascinating chapter on possible psychic perception of past events covers such incidents as the Dieppe Raid case and the Battle of Nechtanesmere in Scotland, a local war between the Northumbrians and the Picts in 685 AD, seen in 1950 by a Miss E.F. Smith of Angus.

Details of several other, more modern hauntings are given, such as that in the Abbey House, Cambridge, in June 1980, and a house owned by the National Coal Board in which phenomena occurred in 1968, will probably encourage and provoke the pursuit of further investigations.

In the final chapter MacKenzie, in reviewing the accounts of haunts and apparitions published by the SPR during its first century, notes that the editors (wisely, he feels) emphasized the evidentiality of the cases rather than speculation on the nature of the experiences reported. "But now," he adds, "surely, the time has come for more emphasis to be placed on theoretical aspects of this branch of psychical research and on the psychological background . . ." (p. 209). He offers some interesting theoretical and psychological observations himself. For example, he observes that "often the act of looking away from an apparition, even for a moment,

causes the figure to disappear. The reason for this is that any such act results in a change of consciousness" (p. 14). This observation strengthens the belief that the eventual answer to witnessing so-called ghosts lies in a more intense study of the mind's receptivity.

In closing, he confesses that when he first began to write about apparitions, he mistakenly studied them in isolation rather than considering them against the backdrop of psychical research as a whole. Largely due to the writings of G.N.M. Tyrrell and conversations with Rosalind Heywood, he has come to realize that the question should not so much be "What is an apparition?" but, "What is man?" Instead of dealing with shadows, he asks us to study "the nature of who or what casts the shadow" (p. 224).

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## A NEW SCIENCE OF LIFE: The Hypothesis of Formative Causation

BY RUPERT SHELDRAKE

(Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1981. 229 pp. \$21.95, cloth.)

Reviewed by Leonard George

Dr. George is currently affiliated with the Department of Psychology, Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario. He has investigated the roles of attention, intentional strategies, and imagery in psi performance as a Research Fellow at the Institute for Parapsychology, Durham, and has published papers on this work in the *Journal of Parapsychology*. He has reviewed several books in *Theta*.

Rupert Sheldrake's book merits the serious attention of students of parapsychology for several reasons, not the least of which is the lesson to be learned from the reception the book received upon its publication. When *A New Science of Life* was



released in June 1981, it provoked a flurry of articles, letters, editorials, and book reviews in the prestigious British journals *Nature* and *New Scientist*. A commentator in *Nature* labelled the book "the best candidate for burning there has been for many years." Writers in *New Scientist* rose to Sheldrake's defense, questioning whether "trial by editorial" was appropriate in the twentieth century, and described the book as "an important scientific inquiry into the nature of biological and physical reality." More recently, Nobel prize winning physicist Brian Josephson has spoken out in support of the scientific legitimacy of Sheldrake's work. This controversy indicates that, while some of the spokespersons of mainstream science are still subject to irrational overreactions in the face of unconventional ideas, others now seem relatively open to radically new possibilities.

Why has this book provoked such a storm of debate? In the first place, the author is no crackpot, but a widely-known biologist who has published respectable research in *Nature* and other orthodox organs. Secondly, Sheldrake's provocative notions are presented in such a tightly scientific fashion that it is impossible to rationally reject them *a priori*.

The book begins with a consideration of the three main approaches to biology which have emerged in the history of that field. Currently, the dominant approach is mechanistic, positing that the phenomena of life can in principle be totally explained in terms of known physico-chemical processes. An alternative approach is the venerable idea that life cannot be explained without postulating a nonphysical vital principle which interacts with the physical body. A third possibility is that physical systems of increasing complexity manifest properties which cannot be predicted from the properties of the less complex units comprising the systems, and that some properties of living organisms may not be deductible from events at the chemical level.

Given the notable success of the mechanistic theory in advancing our understanding of life, few biologists are currently interested in the alternatives. The next section of Sheldrake's book explores some of the problems in biology which have eluded mechanistic explanation, and suggests that the prospects for such explanation are actually quite dim. In this section, Sheldrake considers such issues as morphogenesis, or the arising of form in living matter; the sterility of behaviorism as an explanation of behavior; the logical limits of physicalistic explanation; and parapsychology. The treatment of psychology is somewhat disappointing, as Sheldrake does not indicate that his straw person, radical

behaviorism, has largely been abandoned in favor of the more metaphysically neutral approaches of cognitive psychology. Parapsychology is given very brief coverage, which conveys mainly that some impressive evidence exists for the reality of psi and that parapsychological theories are overly vague. Nonetheless, as a whole the section on unsolved problems is successful in indicating that the search for alternatives to the mechanistic approach is important and perhaps necessary for the solution of these problems.

Sheldrake considers the alternatives of vitalism and organicism, and notes that neither approach has succeeded in generating predictions which are testable and distinct from the predictions of conventional biology. The rest of the book consists of the presentation of a new alternative, the "hypothesis of formative causation," which is testable and which can potentially cast new light on the problems discussed earlier in the book.

Sheldrake's hypothesis appears to be a creative combination of elements from both vitalism and organicism. He proposes that, in addition to the types of causation accepted by modern science, another kind, which he calls formative causation, is required to account for the forms of observable reality, both inorganic (such as the forms of crystals) and organic (such as those of organs and organisms). Formative causation is held to occur by means of "morphogenetic fields," a concept adopted from the organicists but refined by Sheldrake. He is careful to define the properties of morphogenetic fields; for instance, they are regarded as nonenergetic in themselves, but as having a patterning effect on existing mass-energy; they have transtemporal effects; and their influence is not expected to attenuate over space.

It seems that Sheldrake is trying to bring a concept similar to that of Aristotle's formal cause into modern science, which has been dominated by explanations relying exclusively on effective and material cases. Sheldrake points out that formative causation differs from Aristotle's formal cause in that the latter concept assumes the existence of eternally given forms, whereas for Sheldrake, the structure of an entity is caused through the "morphic resonance" of that entity's morphogenetic field with the fields of similar entities in the past. The sum total of the effects of these past entities determines the structure of the present morphogenetic field, which in turn determines the material structure of the entity. In order for a morphogenetic field to affect this material structure, there must be present a specific configuration of mass-energy, which Sheldrake names the morphogenetic germ, to act as a

sort of "anchor" around which the field can cause other matter to arrange according to the structure of the field.

From these basic ideas, Sheldrake explores the implications of his hypothesis for the "unsolved problems of biology." From his perspective, an adequate explanation of the inheritance and evolution of biological forms is not possible merely in terms of genes, mutations, and natural selection, but requires the concept of morphic resonance as well. Even the energetic patterns known as behavior are elucidated by Sheldrake's approach in terms of a special kind of morphogenetic field called a motor field.

A crucial feature of the hypothesis of formative causation is that it is falsifiable, an important criterion of a scientific theory. Sheldrake's book contains several explicit suggestions for experiments which would not be difficult to execute, and indeed suggests that the famous series of experiments on the inheritance of acquired characteristics begun by William McDougall and J.B. Rhine in the 1920s (e.g. McDougall, 1927; Rhine & McDougall, 1933) supports his hypothesis, rather than either the Darwinian or the Lamarckian hypotheses which the experiments were designed to evaluate.

Sheldrake points out that another advantageous feature of his hypothesis is its metaphysical neutrality. Morphogenetic fields may be thought of as physical fields, if the definition of "physical" is broadened to include them, so they are not incompatible with a modified form of materialism. Unlike the mechanistic approach, however, which is inherently reductionistic, that of formative causation does not necessarily limit explanation to physico-chemical terms, and therefore is compatible with nonmaterialistic metaphysical theories as well.

Unfortunately, the implications of the hypothesis of formative causation for parapsychology are only sketchily developed in the book; all Sheldrake says is that "it might be possible to formulate an explanation of telepathy in terms of morphic resonance, and of psychokinesis in terms of the modification of probabilistic events within objects under the influence of motor fields" (p. 201). Sheldrake is apparently leaving it to the parapsychologists to apply his notions to their field in detail. He may discover that at least some of the findings of parapsychology may resist explanation in terms of formative causation. For instance, as I understand it his theory would predict that the occurrence of psi under certain experimental conditions might tend to increase the probability of psi manifesting under similar circumstances in the future, through the

effects of morphic resonance on the morphogenetic fields of the future experiments. This prediction is not supported by the often-noted occurrence of decline effects within and across psi experiments (see Kennedy & Taddonio, 1976; Rhine, 1969). Perhaps formative causation is important to the understanding of psi, but Sheldrake's hypothesis, as it stands today, does not appear to provide a sufficient explanation for some of its most striking ostensible characteristics.

It is also unfortunate that *A New Science of Life* says very little about the field theories developed by parapsychologists, such as those of Marshall (1960) and Roll (1964), which resemble Sheldrake's notions in many respects, and antedate them by many years.

Notwithstanding the sketchiness of the implications of Sheldrake's hypothesis for parapsychology, and the apparent limits to its explanatory power as suggested above, I feel that Sheldrake's work is potentially important for parapsychology. The hypothesis of formative causation purports to explain important anomalies within the body of conventional science. If it is tested and found to be supported by experimental findings (a very big "if" at this point), it may have a profound impact on the future course of science. The utility of a concept of nonenergetic, transtemporal, and spatially unconstrained causality in explaining readily observable phenomena will have been demonstrated, and such a development could make the occurrence of psi more plausible, or even expected, by the scientists who today so fiercely oppose challenges to their familiar ways of thinking.

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## DYBBUK

BY GERSHON WINKLER

(New York: Judaica Press, 1981. 354 pp. \$13.95, cloth; \$9.95, paper.)

Reviewed by Jan Ehrenwald

Dr. Ehrenwald obtained his M.D. degree at the Universities of Prague and Vienna. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and for years served as a Trustee of the American Society for Psychical Research. He has written several books on psychotherapy and psi. His most recent book is *The Anatomy of Genius: Split Brains and Global Minds* (Human Sciences Press, 1984).

In Jewish folklore the "Dybbuk" is described as a disembodied soul separated from its original body by some traumatic experience or a person prematurely deceased. It may wander the earth in search of a new body to inhabit, in which case it may give rise to possession. A "Gilgul" is what the author describes as "total possession." There are good and bad Dybbuks reminiscent of possession "from above" and possession "from below" in Christian theology. Bad Dybbuks call for elaborate rites of exorcism. In some cases the Dybbuk may be dormant, which is why the victim may not be aware of possession. According to the author "this would also account for the seeming absence of Dybbuks in the western world today . . . In other instances they may not be correctly identified by the victim or his family, so that the symptoms are mistaken for those of psychopathology or neurological disorder." Unfortunately, the author does not try to determine the criteria for such a distinction. Although he touches upon implications for psychical research and modern studies of reincarnation no attempt is made at critical evaluation of the data. He concludes "It is this book's contention that there is more to life — and death — than macrophysical quantities" (p. 351).

The author's problematical methodological approach should not, however, detract from the scholarly scope and intrinsic value of the material offered in this book. It covers a wide variety of cases from ancient and more recent Jewish mystical experience. The cases are reported from Safed, Smyrna, Bagdad, Brisk, Radun, and elsewhere. They are adapted from Rabbi Chaim Vital; Rabbi Luria, a 16th-century Jewish scholar; from older Chasidic traditions; from a 19th-century collection

by Rabbi Pittai; from a more recent compilation by Rabbi Lopian; and others. Of particular interest is a dramatic account of the purported return or reincarnation of Shabsai Izvil (Sabbatai Tzvi), the false Messiah, adapted from Jehuda Pittai's *Ruchos Mesapros*.

The second part of the book presents a psychological and philosophical study of the Jewish perspective of the Odyssey of the human soul before, during, and after life. Gershon Winkler is a Danish born Jewish scholar and author of an earlier study dealing with the Golem of Prague. The book is highly readable and attractively illustrated by Jochanan Jones.

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## NEW DIRECTIONS IN DEATH EDUCATION AND COUNSELING: Enhancing the Quality of Life in the Nuclear Age

EDITED BY RICHARD A. PACHOLSKI AND  
CHARLES A. CORR

(Arlington, VA: Forum for Death Education and Counseling, 1981. 346 pp. \$12.95, paper.)

Reviewed by Rhea A. White

Thirty-one papers on various approaches to death are offered in this book. Perhaps even more important than its contents is the fact that it provides an introduction to the Forum for Death Education and Counseling, ". . . the only organization in North America which brings together lay and professional persons from a wide variety of individual and disciplinary backgrounds to address issues related to death, dying, and bereavement" (p. vii). The Forum promotes improvements in counseling and in education at all levels, from pre-school through college and medical-professional, by linking people with overlapping interests and offering them effective support.

Founded in 1976, the Forum holds an annual meeting and the papers in this volume were selected from those given at the 1979 and 1980 meetings. They are arranged in seven sections: Enhancing Caring and Caregiving; Understanding Grief and

Bereavement; Sex Differences in Death and Death-Related Concerns Across the Life Span (Symposium); Conceptual Studies; The Usefulness of the Humanities in Death Education (Symposium); Research Studies; and Looking to the Future: Death Education and Counseling in the Nuclear Age.

Of most interest to *Theta* readers is a paper by David K. Meagher, "The Construction and Validation of a Death Attitude Scale," which includes a copy of the questionnaire, and another by Dennis Klass: "What We Have to Learn from the Popular Success of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross: An Analysis of Symbols."

In his Introduction, "On the Death Movement," Herman Feigl expresses his strong belief "that how we regard death and treat the dying is a prime indicator of a civilization's intention and target" (p. xvi). The fact that none of the papers in this volume touch on the evidence and prospects for survival of death, however, indicates that the Forum is overlooking a key factor in understanding and coming to terms with the meaning and nature of death. It is also possible that the omission of survival-related papers may be due to the fact that survival researchers themselves are not aware of the Forum's existence. It is hoped that before too long survival researchers will present their findings to this concerned and dedicated group to the advantage of all parties concerned.

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## MEDIUMSHIP AND SURVIVAL: A Century of Investigations

BY ALAN GAULD

(London: Heinemann, 1982. 282 pp. Distributed in the U.S.: North Pomfret, VT: David & Charles, 1983. \$18.95, cloth.)

Reviewed by Frank B. Dilley

Dr. Dilley is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Delaware. He is interested in the survival problem, about which he has written articles in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, *Journal of Religion and Psychical Research*, and *Research Letter*.

Alan Gauld, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Nottingham, has written a magnificent book on mediumship and survival. Those of us who have learned to respect Gauld's work from his

earlier books on the founders of psychical research and poltergeists and his careful treatment of "dis-carnate survival" in the Wolman volume will not be disappointed by this book. It bids fair to become the classic treatment of the subject, equal to Ducasse in the strength of its analytic work and of more value than Ducasse because of the richness of detailed discussion of the cases it presents.

About half of the book is given over to mediumship, with careful discussions of Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Leonard and "drop-in" communicators. The other half consists of excellent chapters on obsession and possession, reincarnation, out-of-body experiences, and apparitions. Besides all that, Gauld presents some bonus treatments: an excellent chapter on memory and the brain and a discussion of models of ESP. There is nothing wasted in this book, and I highly recommend it.

There are two serious weaknesses, however, one a surprising one. Since Dr. Gauld is a psychologist one would expect his treatment of some of the alternatives to survival to be much more sophisticated than it is. He gives a total of four pages to hoaxing, mistaken testimony, and chance, treating them in only superficial aspects and coming to the surprising conclusion (p. 13) that people do *not* have a tendency to exaggerate their tales. He says almost nothing about the psychology of mediumistic sittings; for example, he relies heavily on the judgment of sitters, hardly raising any questions about their objectivity. I would have expected a chapter at least on such topics as suggestion, unconscious fraud, wishful thinking, and the like.

The other problem is that it does not give an understandable account of his alternative to the transmission theory of ESP. It perhaps is unfair to fault Dr. Gauld on this matter since ESP may be an understandable phenomenon. He gives an excellent demolition, though, of the transmission theory of ESP.

Throughout the book, much attention is given to super-ESP as *the* major alternative explanation to survival. The reader will appreciate the care with which, after analyzing individual cases, Gauld sorts out the relative merits of the super-ESP hypothesis and the survival hypothesis. If we can take the accounts at face value, super-ESP no longer remains an attractive possibility after Gauld's searching criticism.

Gauld gives a number of reasons for rejecting super-ESP, including the weakness of the Osty and Soal materials on which super-ESP is conventionally based. Two other major reasons for rejecting super-ESP accounts are the lack of any demonstration of

an active ESP power of the magnitude that super-ESP would require under ordinary conditions, and the difficulty in accounting by ESP for impersonations of skills and personal qualities which so closely resemble those of the dead person. It is because of the importance of the latter argument that I wish Gauld had discussed the psychology of sitter anticipation more thoroughly. Given the atmosphere of hope that a survivor would manifest himself through the medium, how close an impersonation would really have to be given to be taken as convincing by those assembled? I notice that Brooke Moore in his recent assessment of evidence for survival (*The Philosophical Possibilities Beyond Death*, Springfield, Illinois, Charles C Thomas, 1981), following Podmore, gives greater weight to information than to personal qualities and skills. This means, of course, that Moore is able to give greater weight to the super-ESP hypothesis than Gauld. If Gauld is right in his claim that items of evidence can be acquired by ESP but personal skills cannot, and I find that argument plausible, then a great deal of evidentiary weight rests on whether the impersonations of skills of dead people by the mediums was close. Having observed professional impersonators in other settings, I am not comfortable with the ability of ordinary people to distinguish impersonations from the real thing.

E.J. Dingwall, in a recent "blast" at psychic researchers, claimed that the Society for Psychical Research refused to permit adequate access to independent investigators in the matter of the famous cross-correspondences. He claims that people who want to know details of those cases will still meet every sort of obstruction, evasion, and refusal of requests to verify details of the stories in question. If I had the knowledge of Mr. Dingwall, I might have been even more troubled by Gauld's acceptance of the reports on cross-correspondences and related matters at more-or-less face value. I reiterate my disappointment in the lack of adequate discussion of such matters in this book. Also, I wonder about the curious absence from the bibliography and from the discussion of any mention of the voluminous works of Trevor Hall. Gauld knows of his works but never mentions them.

Gauld seems to opt for the theory of "overshadowing" to explain how survivors manage to communicate with the living through mediums. Although I am not quite clear what Gauld means, he seems to take the relation between survivors and mediums as a sort of temporary possession rather than an ESP-like relation. He accepts the theory of Mrs. Sidgwick, who concluded on the basis of her

lengthy study of Mrs. Piper that the controls were aspects of the medium's personality rather than independent entities. Occasionally, however, a survivor seems to "overshadow" the medium's personality, enabling it to manifest not only information, but, more decisively, aspects of the personality of the survivor. His explanation of apparitions, both of the living and of the dead, is that the living or dead personality is able to project from a distance a disturbance of the visual or auditory field which can be perceived by those who see or hear the apparition. The apparition is, thus, not the actual person but only a projection of the actual person. He comments that perhaps that is the same power that enables a survivor to overshadow a medium.

In his "Concluding Remarks" he suggests directions for further study, concluding that the major obstacle to advancement in the field is lack of funds. I wish he had advised those people who do further research to take a few elementary precautions, such as having access to neutral observers and persons skilled in the practice of magic. Recent debacles at the Stanford Research Institute and the McDonnell Laboratories point up this advisability.

Gauld's book is indispensable for those who are seriously interested in the question of evidence for survival. It is a judicious book and is to be highly recommended. Gauld thinks that the case for survival is weak but more convincing than any of the other options. I wish he had speculated more on why the dead seem to communicate so seldom. He mentions that there are only a few "drop-in" communicators, whereas there are many more apparitions of the dead that appear to those who are not expecting them, but why is it that there is not more conclusive evidence for survival? Why do some of the cases not happen in London before a full meeting of the SPR?

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## PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND SELF-DECEPTION IN SCIENCE

EDITED BY R.A. MCCONNELL

(Pittsburgh: R.A. McConnell, 1983. 150 pp. \$9.00, paper. Single copies available from the University of Pittsburgh Book Center, 400 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.)

*Reviewed by Emily W. Cook*

*Ms. Cook is a Research Assistant in the Division of Parapsychology, University of Virginia. She has participated in reincarnation research and has published articles and reviews in the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, and Research in Parapsychology.*

In this book, the second of a series of three written, edited, and published by Dr. McConnell, the author/editor has assembled a heterogeneous collection of previously unpublished papers and documents (most of them authored or co-authored by McConnell), together with background information and sections of commentary, also written by McConnell. With this volume, the author calls attention to three important issues in the conduct of science: namely, the publication process, the evaluation of specific pieces of scientific research, and the role of science and scientists in social problems.

After an introduction and summary of the book, McConnell devotes Chapters 2-5 to the issue of publication in parapsychology; three of the chapters are three papers that were rejected by the parapsychological journals to which they were submitted. Chapter 2 is an account written by a Chinese-American physicist of his informal observations while on a trip in China of children who claim to "read" written words paranormally. As McConnell explains in his introduction to the chapter, the paper was rejected by the referees and editor of *Parapsychology Review*. In Chapter 3 McConnell discusses the rejection of a pair of his papers by the *Journal of Parapsychology* and the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*; most of the chapter consists of texts of letters written by McConnell to the journals' editors. In Chapter 4 McConnell publishes the first of these papers, a review and re-analysis of an experiment published by McConnell in 1955, in which he emphasizes for readers the nature and extent of the experimental controls in effect and discusses post-hoc analyses of some interaction effects. Chapter 5 is the second of these two papers, and in it McConnell and his co-author, T.K. Clark, discuss the decline effect found in this experiment and suggest that it indicates the operation of two psychological principles, which McConnell and Clark call "the organizing principle" and "the principle of ambivalence."

In Chapter 6 McConnell turns to the issue of research evaluation by chronicling, as he saw them, events occurring during a graduate student's progression toward a Ph.D. in biophysics and psychobiology. The judgments of her graduate committee

and the resulting delays in the awarding of her doctoral degree were not based, in McConnell's opinion, on the quality of her work; instead, he thinks, they resulted from the committee's awareness that her data contradicted the work and theoretical expectations of her chief advisor and that she had an underlying interest in parapsychology.

The final chapter is the text of an address presented by McConnell at the August 1982 meeting of the SPR and PA in Cambridge, England. In this paper, McConnell examines certain ecological and social problems, which he feels can only be solved with the deeper understanding of human nature that research in parapsychology may bring. He also lists seven goals he believes parapsychological research will have achieved by the year 2000 A.D., accomplishments he thinks will bring us closer to that understanding.

Few readers will disagree that the problems raised in this book are important ones; but other than serving the undeniably important function of forcefully reminding us that these questions must be continually addressed by members of the scientific community, the author does regrettably little to clarify or further our thinking on these matters. First of all, most readers are simply in no position to make a reasonable judgment about the specific instances to which McConnell refers. Given only McConnell's presentation of the reasons for the rejection of the three papers, one can only suspend judgment about the editors' decisions to reject. The few remarks quoted from the referees' comments indicate that the manner of presentation, rather than the content, was the primary objection. (In fact, it would seem that one of the journals did not reject the papers outright but offered to publish them in a somewhat shortened and revised form.) In this assessment I can only concur wholeheartedly with the referees, since McConnell's tone is often unnecessarily offensive and dismissive of approaches or views different from his own. The history of science would indicate that how and when something is presented is often as important as *what* is presented. Although McConnell apparently does not agree, editors must concern themselves with the effects a paper may have on readers, as well as with its content. Poor writing or (in McConnell's case) a needlessly antagonistic manner can and will obscure even the best of ideas. Communication of any kind, but particularly of ideas, is a two-way process: If one is to get a message across to readers, one must anticipate and understand readers' reactions, whether or not one agrees with those reactions.

The case of the graduate student is a similar, although undoubtedly more complicated situation. We have nothing but McConnell's judgment that the student's controversial research findings and her interest in parapsychology prejudiced her committee's evaluation of her. In fact, there is no explicit evidence given showing that the committee members were even aware of her interest in parapsychology. But even if one assumes McConnell's evaluation to be correct, one wonders what purpose is served in publicly airing these grievances. There are channels for correcting errors of judgment or injustices. There is the process of evaluation of one's research by a community of peers, which is slow and admittedly imperfect, but in which a practicing scientist presumably still has faith. There are also provisions at most universities for presenting grievances to university colleagues or even to outside committees. Bypassing such channels in an appeal to an audience that is not qualified to make a judgment (both because of lack of professional expertise in the fields involved and because of the limited, one-sided nature of this presentation) serves no purpose but to erode the reader's confidence in the author. Furthermore, associating this kind of argument or approach with parapsychology does a disservice to the field and to parapsychologists who have not given up on the usual process by which scientific work is to be evaluated.

McConnell suggests that the solution to the problems raised in this book lies in a resurgence of moral values, and in the final chapter we begin to see how he thinks this resurgence will come about, namely, through certain achievements in parapsychological research. He seems to imply that what is needed, because of the urgency of the problems, is the social planning and guidance of scientific research, an idea that has been much debated and discussed in modern times (see, for example, M. Polanyi's *Science, Faith, and Society*). As he does throughout this volume, McConnell here again betrays an impatience with and lack of faith in the usual processes guiding progress in scientific research, by arguing that the special needs of the situation warrant an exception to the ordinary rules.

The somewhat ambiguous title of the book presages the entire text, in that the relationship of parapsychology to the three issues raised here is far from clear to the reader. McConnell's theses are that parapsychologists are deceiving themselves about the nature and place of their work, orthodox scientists are deceiving themselves about the importance of parapsychology, and all of us are deceiving ourselves about the future of society; but

his discussions of these claims are short on clearcut evidence and long on sardonic polemics. Even for those who may find themselves agreeing with his assessment of the status quo, McConnell makes no attempt to suggest a reasonable course of action to bring about the necessary changes. In short, the book lectures us but does not teach us. McConnell has done much over the years to try to bring parapsychology to the attention of other scientists, and this present volume is an attack on parapsychologists, many of whom seem to have become complacent in the face of continuing rejection and ridicule by colleagues in other fields of science. But because of his approach, it is unfortunate but probably true that, for many readers, whatever of value there is in McConnell's ideas will be overshadowed by his own apparent intolerance. Surely failure to agree with McConnell's conclusions about the merit of specific research, the direction science ought to take, and the pace with which it should move does not in itself constitute self-deception.

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## THE WAY OF SPLENDOR: Jewish Mysticism and Modern Psychology

BY EDWARD HOFFMAN

(*Boulder: Shambhala, 1981. 247 pp. \$7.95, paper.*)

*Reviewed by Rhea A. White*

Edward Hoffman is a clinical psychologist who has mined the lore of the Kabbalah, the esoteric offshoot of Judaism, for its psychological (and parapsychological) insights. His book is aimed at persons with no familiarity with Jewish mysticism or philosophy. Dr. Hoffman had drawn substantially on key Kabbalistic texts, quoting from them where appropriate, but he intends the book to serve as a bridge to the Kabbalah, not as a substitute for primary sources.

His interest in the Kabbalah was piqued by reading Martin Buber's works on mysticism and Hasidism, which he found complemented works on Eastern mysticism studied by Western psychologists in recent years. His hunch was that "the new breed

of humanistic and transpersonal psychologists, in their rush to embrace the Orient, were overlooking an extremely relevant, forgotten system of knowledge" (p. vii).

Hoffman himself, in the Introduction, provides a brief overview of the contents of the book:

The chief focus . . . will . . . be on the psychological aspects of the Kabbalah, as one of the distinguishing features of Jewish mysticism is its emphasis on the day-to-day relevance of the visionary experience. As many scholars have noted, a basic goal of this path is to teach the initiate how to bring the divine element into the stream of ordinary activity. Following a look at the historical evolution and metaphysical assumptions of the Kabbalah, I will explore such topics as its views on human emotions, the mind-body relationship, the nature of our consciousness, and our potential for self-transcendence. Finally, I will share my findings on Kabbalistic notions regarding such intriguing subjects as parapsychology, life after death, and reincarnation. (p. 5)

The chapters of primary concern to persons interested in psi and theta phenomena are the seventh and eighth, "The Dimension Beyond" and "Life and Death: The Immortal Soul." However, insights relevant to parapsychology are found throughout the book, as, for example, references in the chapter on Jewish mysticism to Abraham Abulafia, a key Kabbalist, who set forth techniques by means of which he felt, "any person could acquire paranormal abilities. For him, such powers and their related ecstatic mental states are within the grasp of each of us" (p. 14).

In college I was taught that Judaism was primarily a religion of this world, and that it held no teachings concerning a world beyond death. This reflects, perhaps, the limited knowledge in the 1950s, even in scholarly circles, concerning the wisdom of Hasidism and the Kabbalah. Hoffman describes Kabbalistic teachings concerning the importance of the moment of death; near-death and deathbed experiences, in which deceased loved ones appear to ease the entrance of the dying person into a new dimension; and descriptions of the afterlife. Hoffman points out that "chief texts like the *Zohar* clearly portray the act of dying as a transition — with definite aspects — to further levels of being. Moreover . . . there is full continuity of consciousness from one state to the next" (p. 218).

The Kabbalah also contains teachings concerning reincarnation, and the *Lamed-vov*, or the Jewish counterpart to the Buddhist *bodhisattvas*, who, although themselves beyond the cycle of rebirth, nevertheless choose to return to earthly existence in order to lead others to the immortal life.

Hoffman feels that the Kabbalah has a vital role to play in the current transformation of our views of ourselves and of our world. Although there has been much interest in ways in which the Eastern spiritual traditions can change our psychological understanding, he feels they have not been equal to the task. He proposes that both Eastern and Western teachings be considered, and adds: "There is one longstanding and cogent body of knowledge that may still provide the much needed vision — and that, as I have sought to illustrate . . . is the Kabbalah" (p. 208). In the final chapter he provides a helpful summary of the key features of the Kabbalah as they relate to the search for a new view of the mind.

With its lucid text, useful glossary, nine-page bibliography, and detailed index, Hoffman has met the goal he set himself — to introduce the general reader to the psychological insights long hidden in the texts of the Kabbalah.

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## J.B. RHINE: On The Frontiers of Science

EDITED BY K. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

(Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1982. 263 pp. \$19.95, cloth.)

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I was a 24-year-old graduate student travelling around the U.S. when, on September 17th, 1979, I had the privilege of meeting Dr. J.B. Rhine. I remember with what excitement, and, yes, even awe, I traversed the short distance on my way from the Institute of Parapsychology to the Rhines' office, as if I had been, for the first time about to meet Freud, or a great Pope. Our time in conversation was not long, and I remember well the difficulty of inducing him to talk about himself. I was also aware of his generosity in taking time to see me, since he was quite unwell and shortly to undergo surgery.



I soon realized that I had been not only privileged but lucky: just a few months later, on February 20th, 1980, the man who had in some ways done for parapsychology what Freud had done for psychology, passed away. On November 28th of that same year, the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man and Duke University's Psychology Department co-sponsored a memorial conference on the life and achievement of J.B. Rhine. Six papers, considered to be representative of the 17 tributes, reviews, and professional evaluations of Rhine's work delivered at this conference were published in somewhat edited form in a memorial issue of the *Journal of Parapsychology*, 1981, 45 (1). However, *J.B. Rhine: On the Frontiers of Science* contains 16 of the papers presented at this conference as well as three others which were specially written for the volume. There is, in addition, an introduction by the editor, Dr. K. Ramakrishna Rao; a chronological list of events important in Rhine's life; a very full and useful 23-page bibliography compiled by Farilla David and listing, again chronologically, the voluminous output of publications by Rhine during his professional career (viz. from 1924 to 1980); a short bibliography of publications *about* Rhine; and an index. The book is well-bound, with easy-to-read type, and only an occasional printing error. I consider it a minor deficiency, but I think the book would have been improved by the addition of some notes about the contributors, and, more particularly, of a brief glossary of terms and abbreviations, even if no longer than the one regularly published in the *Journal of Parapsychology*: both these features could assist readers who have only a minimal background of parapsychological knowledge.

I had just one brief meeting with Rhine. I, and to an even greater extent my parapsychological contemporaries and our successors, will have to know him at second-hand, through the idiosyncratic eyes of those who knew him and his work through direct and personal contact. We might suspect that we were receiving an inevitably slanted viewpoint had we to rely on but one commentator. A multiple-author approach, however, such as is to be found in this book, does much to reassure the reader that he or she will have many different perspectives on its subject which will allow us to extract a composite yet many-faceted picture of Rhine and his importance in the history of science.

On the other hand, since this book comes so soon after the man's death, and, moreover, as the record of a memorial conference, I was wary of the fact that there can be such a thing as too much praise. I was apprehensive lest the book turn out to

be an apotheosis, rather than an appreciation; a hagiography, rather than a human history. But I soon discovered that I had had little cause for alarm: the essays, contributed by a galaxy of eminent parapsychological writers representing a host of academic disciplines, are as thought-provoking as they are thoughtful, at one moment describing, at another, evaluating and integrating. But neither are the authors afraid to disagree, though in a most urbane way, with what they see as Rhine's shortcomings or errors, whether these be in his approach to psi research (especially the survival question), his interpretations of the data, or whatever. But all, explicitly or implicitly, acknowledge the importance of his place as a founder, perhaps *the* founder, of modern-day parapsychology, such that it will henceforth be inconceivable to write an accurate history of our science without reference to his achievement. The portrait is of a human being, but a very great and influential one.

The fact that this book is as much an evaluation of Rhine as a description of him means that its utility and potential relevance are greatly multiplied: not only parapsychologists but philosophers, historians, mainline psychologists, and sociologists of knowledge will find much to interest them. I have often read lengthy tributes to other great scientists and come away with the feeling that I *still* did not really know the reason for their greatness. Not so with this volume.

J.B. Rhine has certainly left behind a scientific achievement which will be hard to rival — methods, concepts, data, professionalization — but it was a foundation rather than a completed structure. We of the younger generation of parapsychologists have inherited the task of building a stable edifice upon that groundwork — no mean task, given the notorious instability and unpredictability of psi, and the shortage of money to fund able researchers in an unorthodox field. But perhaps we can take inspiration from the personal model that Rhine provided: his dedication to the scientific method and to the most unimpeachable experimental controls; his integrity and honesty, which have never successfully been impugned; his equanimity in the face of incredulity, hostility, and contumely; and his willingness to persevere in his search for scientific truth even in the face of the most adverse circumstances.

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