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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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Theta Association is the membership organization of the Psychical Research Foundation. The Association provides a yearly subscription to THETA and active involvement in the work of the Foundation. It permits interested persons to help support PRF research and to participate in research projects and field investigations of psi phenomena. Further information is available by writing to Dr. Arthur Berger, Vice President, Theta Association, Duke Station, Durham, NC 27706.

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Dr. J. Gaither Pratt, President of the Board of Trustees of the Psychical Research Foundation since its inception in 1960, died suddenly on November 3, 1979, at his home near Charlottesville, Virginia. At the time of his death he was Professor of Psychiatry at the Division of Parapsychology, University of Virginia with which he had been associated since 1964.

Pratt received a Ph.D. in psychology in 1936 from Duke University. In 1937 he joined the staff of the Parapsychology Laboratory and eventually became its assistant director. At the Parapsychology Laboratory he was responsible for the successful Pearce-Pratt and Pratt-Woodruff ESP tests as well as experiments with the well-known medium, Eileen Garrett. He developed the Pratt-Birge method for the evaluation of verbal material and was an early and influential researcher of poltergeist phenomena.

In addition to his editorial work on the *Journal of Parapsychology* and the first volume of the *Proceedings of the Parapsychological Association*, Pratt wrote numerous articles and eight books, the most recent of which was *The Psychic Realm: What Can You Believe?* co-authored by Naomi Hintze. An excerpt follows from one of the sections written by Pratt.

J. G. Pratt On Survival

We first have to consider whether the evidence for survival can be explained in terms of the psi abilities of the living, such as the medium who gave the information. If, for example, the information already existed in somebody's mind, the medium might have obtained it by telepathy. Or if it existed in some personal record that was known only to the apparent communicator, the medium could, conceivably, have got it from that source by clairvoyance.

Reprinted from The Psychic Realm: What Can You Believe? by Naomi Hintze and J.G. Pratt (New York: Random House, Inc., 1975) pp. 235-242. Permission granted by Naomi Hintze and the Estate of J.G. Pratt.

Nevertheless, much of the evidence that has been collected on survival is so striking that it is difficult to explain it in terms of what we have learned about psi in other contexts. If the survival evidence is all due to the psi capacities of the living, then some mediums who think that they are transmitting communications from surviving spirits are capable of demonstrating extraordinary powers of ESP—so extraordinary that it has been dubbed “super-psi.” 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.

I remain highly skeptical regarding the claims that messages from surviving personalities have been recorded on tape. . . . [P]roblems are also inherent in this method that proponents have not clearly recognized.

One is the lack of relevant personal details in the supposed communications. There is nothing on the tapes comparable to the kind of detailed personal information obtained through the best of the mediumistic sittings and which the communicators gave to support their claims of survival beyond death. The statements on the tapes, on the other hand, are so cryptic that they provide little, if any, evidence of personal identity.

Another problem is the failure (particularly in the work of Raudive) to verify that the sounds on the tapes are really the words that he has personally taken them to be. This would require that different persons listen to the same recordings and indicate what they hear—each doing so without knowing what others hear. Instead of working in this way, Raudive begins a “test” by carefully instructing the listeners in advance regarding what they are supposed to hear (which means that he has already decided what the message is). This difficulty exists for those cases when the recording is very faint and difficult to interpret, which is the situation for most of them.

Occasionally, we are told, the words are unmistakable. In those instances we have the questions: Where did they come from? How did they get on the tape? The danger of picking up snatches of ordinary radio broadcasts is one that must be taken into account and clearly excluded before we could conclude that we have recorded the voices of the dead. Also, the possibility that words are somehow put on the tape by PK (mind over matter) from the living—Dr. Bender’s preferred explanation—is a real alternative. It has become more attractive for me since I discovered in [a] recent poltergeist case that faint tappings, low rhythmic knocks, and grunting sounds that were not heard in the

room were nevertheless picked up on the tape. We attributed these sounds to the unconscious PK influence of the central person in the case, a ten-year-old girl who had reached puberty before she was nine. The recording of those inaudible sounds makes it easier for me to consider that inaudible **words** can also occasionally be put on tape by PK from the living.

I suggest that the future of this whole approach might be made more clear if tapings are first taken from the living. Let it be some standard test phrase, such as “Mary had a little lamb. Its fleece was white as snow.” Then when one of these persons later wishes to prove that he has survived death, the message should be only his name, plus “Mary had a little lamb, Its fleece was white as snow.” The evidence of survival would rest upon comparing the voice prints of the “before” and “after” recordings. If they matched, this could well go far toward providing the super-psi-proof evidence that the two samples are from the same person, one made before the death of the body and the other after that event. This result, I feel, would be strong evidence for survival.

In making studies of mediums to explore the possibility of survival, investigators tried to take nothing for granted. The fact that the medium in trance was apparently under the guidance of some controlling personality was not accepted uncritically as literally true. Rather, the controls were considered to be only imaginary personalities which were dramatic creations of the mediums.

Several of the investigators who had taken a leading part in the survival research died around the turn of the century. Following their deaths, they apparently began to play an active role as participants in the research from the other side. They themselves became frequent communicators in the research and sometimes even became the principal controls, displacing those who had seemed to be entrenched in that role before they died.

Dr. Hodgson had moved from London to Boston in 1887, where he devoted most of his time to the investigations of Mrs. Piper until his death in December 1905. In February 1906 William James wrote to his friend Théodore Flournoy in Switzerland about the sudden death of Hodgson and stated his opinion that all aspects of Mrs. Piper’s mediumship had been fully explored. Yet in July 1906, just six months later, he wrote that a great deal of automatic writing was now coming through Mrs. Piper that seemed to originate from Hodgson and that he (James) had agreed to organize the material and report it. The task grew as the material continued to accumulate, and the report of more than a hundred pages was finally published in 1909, just a year before James’s death.

A new and striking stage of survival evidence was reached in Britain during the first two decades of this century. This was in the form of literary puzzles that were based upon a detailed knowledge of Classical Greece, which had been Frederic Myers’ special field of academic study. Following Myers’ death in 1901, a few of the members of

the Society for Psychical Research had attempted deliberately and successfully to receive "messages" through automatic writing. When they appeared to be receiving worthwhile material, they started to send it to key persons in the SPR for safekeeping and analysis. The examination of these records from several automatists quite unexpectedly revealed that the records received by different automatists, separated as widely as India, Britain, and America, were hinting at common classical themes, but doing so in such a way that it was possible to tell what was being communicated only when the separate pieces of the puzzle were assembled from the different records. Furthermore, the communications made it clear that this was an experiment planned from the other side, one intended to make it more difficult to attribute the communications to the psi capacities of the automatists.

This material was quite complex, and only those few investigators who were sufficiently well informed about the literature and culture of Classical Greece were qualified to appreciate it at first hand. But these difficulties were also the strengths of this special evidence, because the nature of the information made it that much more difficult to suppose that pieces of the puzzle could have been assembled by the ESP powers of persons of ordinary educational talents, such as Mrs. Piper.

It would be a mistake to consider that the strictly mediumistic material stands alone as evidence relevant to the survival question. To it must be added the evidence from everyday life covering such psychic experiences as apparitions of dying persons or of those who had recently died when the persons seeing the lifelike visions had not yet learned of the death. Also, there are cases on record, thoroughly investigated, in which a dreamer received a particular message that seemed to come from the spirit of a deceased person, bringing information that the apparent communicator would have wished to convey. Also relevant here are haunting cases in which an influence appears to be associated with a particular location. . . . Such experiences do not prove survival, but they are a part of the complex pattern making up the woven fabric of evidence relevant to the issue.

We can see more clearly now, also, the relevance to survival of the experiences of separation of the center of consciousness from the physical body. While it is true that the lines of research. . . on altered states of consciousness have not yet reached the point of conclusiveness, they have made a start, and we may reasonably hope for further findings that will advance such investigations to the point for a decision.

The research by Osiris and Haraldsson on the deathbed observations of physicians and nurses is a novel approach—one that is a welcome addition to the methods of studying the survival question. Their work is a good illustration of how scattered claims from real-life situations can be turned to advantage by ingenious research methods.

In another direction, following a method published by Ian Stevenson, I have set the combination of a lock, and it

can be opened only by twisting the dial to match three two-digit numbers. I chose the combination by taking an arbitrary starting point in a table of random numbers and then reading off the first six digits. Afterward I made up a six-word sentence in which the initial letters of the six words, decoded according to the procedure published in the Stevenson paper, correspond to the six digits. Then I set the combination on my lock using the three two-digit numbers and conforming with the secret sentence, a device used solely as an indirect aid in remembering the combination.

All of this procedure was carried out entirely in my head, so there was not at any time any written record or any spoken description of any of the steps that might be used as a target for clairvoyance. Nor shall I ever permit myself to make a record while I am living that could make my combination available after my death through the ESP abilities of a medium or anyone else who may successfully get the six-word sentence (or the combination directly) that opens my lock.

During the four years that have passed since I prepared the test, I have annually closed myself in my office and have taken out the lock and proved, by silently opening the lock, that I still recall my memory device. Now I am ready to have anyone try to learn my secret by telepathy while I am alive. Anyone is welcome to try, but I will not promise to help. In fact, I intend to see that all such efforts fail while I am living, if I can do so.

In the event that I find myself surviving death, I intend to communicate the sentence that will open my lock. If I succeed, that will be evidence that I have survived. By itself it will not be conclusive proof of survival, but if such evidence can be obtained from a number of persons who have died, it could become strong support of the survival hypothesis. Already a number of people have set locks. As we die, failure to receive the necessary communications to open any of the locks will not disprove survival. We simply do not know whether the nature of an afterlife makes it possible to carry over into that existence a simple secret memory and to act successfully on the strong resolve to make it known to those still living on earth. Even if the intention to communicate is still clear after death, success of this test will depend upon whether a suitable medium or other channel of communication can be found. My thought is to try first making contact through the Icelandic medium Hafsteinn,* if he is still living. If that channel is closed for any reason, I will seek another; or even, for safety's sake, two or more.

The idea of leaving behind some kind of sealed or coded message is not new, since some of the early investigators, including Sir Oliver Lodge, did this. But the method favored in those early days was to prepare a secret sealed package in the hope that the contents could be accurately described through a medium after the preparer's death. But when a message that seemed reasonable had been received, the only way of checking on its accuracy was to open the

*Hafsteinn predeceased Dr. Pratt—Ed. Note.

package. The act of checking-up put an end to the test, regardless of whether the message was right or wrong. So far, the sealed-message tests have all failed, and even if such a test should succeed, the results could be easily explained by clairvoyance by the medium.

Dr. Robert Thouless was the first investigator to recognize the importance of finding a method which would not involve destroying the test in order to check up on the accuracy of a single trial. He published in 1948 a literary passage with its meaning concealed in a code that could not be broken without the use of a verbal key that only he knows. He also has challenged persons in contact with good mediums to try to get the key from his mind while he is living. If they do not succeed, it is his intention to try to reveal the key after his death as evidence that he has survived, and the proof of success will lie in the fact that it will then be possible to translate into plain English the coded passage he has already published.

I welcome also the test proposed by Dr. Schmeidler. . . in which persons are tested to register their individual personality characteristics. If one of those persons claimed to be communicating through a medium after death, the same tests would be given again and the two sets of results compared to see if they could only have come from the same person.

To give us the opportunity to get evidence that he had survived death, Dr. Pratt said he intended to communicate a six word sentence after his death which would supply the combination to open a lock he had left (see p. 3). We invite attempts to obtain this sentence or the combination of six digits and ask all who believe they have obtained this data to write to us.

Four German Poltergeists

Elmar R. Gruber

Elmar R. Gruber, a member of the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, and a graduate student at the University of Vienna, reports on four recent German poltergeist cases, two of which have not been published before.

The Oberhausen Case (1973-1974)

There was a birthday party in the small house, but most of the 15 guests were outside. They had first been alarmed by a door falling down the cellar stairs and by a wardrobe repeatedly overturning even after it had been wired in place. But when a jet of water spouted into the living room from the kitchen, they fled.

The occasion of this impressive "poltergeist show" on February 26, 1974, was the 70th birthday of Mrs. J. Her husband, J., and their grandson, K., aged 17, lived with her in this lower middle class house in a suburb of Oberhausen.

The disturbances had begun on November 12, 1973: Water faucets repeatedly came unscrewed from their threads even after the plumber replaced them with new ones. No signs of tampering could be found. Around November 16 the electric current began cutting on and off. Puddles of water appeared on the floor and water stains appeared on the ceiling, the water disturbances becoming so intense that the water company was called in. On December 2 explosions were heard and tremors felt, objects were seen flying around the room, and both the front and back doors of the house fell from their hinges.

On December 16 a member of the Freiburg Institute visited the house. During his visit more disturbances occurred, some of which he could see were caused intentionally by K. After some unpleasantness between the investigator and K., the disturbances stopped until January 21, 1974, when the activity began again with the same types of phenomena that began the case. About the 26th of January Mr. J. was injured and K. was hit and knocked down with such force by a falling door that he needed his grandfather's help to get up. On January 29, K. was taken to a nearby hotel to see if anything would happen at the house while he was away. During his absence, Mrs. J. took her dog for a walk. When she returned, she had great difficulty dragging the animal into the house. The dog seemed to be terrified by something Mrs. J. could not explain. She then heard a loud sound and the door fell from its hinges. At short intervals, pieces of furniture and articles of clothing came falling down the staircase. From then on the case remained extremely active.

The family came to Freiburg for psychodiagnostic testing (February 6 to 12). After their return to Oberhausen the phenomena started again. This time, pieces of furniture flew around the rooms, and Mr. J. was hit repeatedly by chairs whirling in the air. Again a great many water phenomena took place as well as disturbances in the electric circuits. In one instance a burning newspaper came flying from K.'s room. The family was frightened by the violence of the phenomena and decided to leave the house. They had to go through the cellar door because the front door was blocked by "RSPK-transported" objects. While leaving the house Mr. J. heard K. screaming and found him unconscious in front of the door with a heavy sledge hammer lying on his back. There was a large lump on his neck.

Some RSPK activity continued into April. The phenomena ceased in May 1974.

Let us now turn to the psychological mechanisms behind the case. The Family J. is characterized by considerable interfamilial antagonistic tendencies which are tacitly denied. The relation between Mr. J. and his grandson is especially complicated and difficult. K. does not measure up to J.'s expectations and, at the same time, receives much attention from J.'s wife. Jealousy, as well as latent and overt hostility, controls his relation to K. Mrs. J. is the center of the family. Mr. J. and K. have adjusted their behavior to her. Strictly speaking, she is the bearer of the family's pathology. She fulfills nearly all known personality patterns for RSPK agents. The structure of her personality is hysterical with a remarkable depressive restraint. According to Johnson and Szurek (1952) children often act out the antisocial impulses of their parents. In this case, one might formulate as a central hypothesis that the acting out of Mrs. J.'s unconscious aggressive wishes is carried out by the grandson K. as a behavioral reaction to the expressions of unconscious and suppressed interfamilial elements. This could serve as a model for one aspect of the reported RSPK activity.

In this very complex case, however, one cannot speak of one exclusive RSPK agent since, although most of the

phenomena happened when K. as well as Mrs. J. were present, some violent phenomena were reported when K. was absent. Taking this into account, we cannot analyze the case by means of the Roll-Artley paradigm which implies a certain "lawfulness" in the relation of the distance of an RSPK event from the alleged focal person.

The Freiburg-Oberau Case (1976)

This case was the first to happen right before our eyes in Freiburg itself. But even here the "poltergeist" showed his contrariness: The RSPK activity started in June 1976 and continued during July and August when most staff members were on vacation.

The Freiburg-Oberau case started with an incident often reported as the initial phenomenon: On June 23, 1976, the kitchen windows were broken by a "flying" stone. Four persons lived in the ground floor apartment where the RSPK activity started. They were the grandmother, E.K., her daughter, E.H., the daughter's husband, Mr. H., and the daughter's son Thomas who was then 14 years old. After the breaking of the window panes the family found that things on the balcony were completely destroyed. The next day more window panes broke and one of the flying stones hit Thomas on the temple. At that stage the family thought that someone was playing rough jokes on them. A tool box on the balcony was broken and the tools scattered around. Their nameplate from the front door was found broken in pieces near the house. On June 26 bicycles in the cellar were found smeared with paint and open paint cans were scattered around. Water taps, fuses and fuse holders disappeared.

The RSPK activity followed Thomas to his aunts' apartment. On one occasion Thomas's school books disappeared and were found under a bed in his aunts' apartment. Among the various events reported there were a number of phenomena which fit the well-known pattern of RSPK events: Raps were heard on the window panes and window sills; pictures fell from the walls and so did a bowl of holy water near Thomas's bed.

The RSPK case remained active during July and became even more active on July 23: The bowl containing the holy water appeared in a pot of milk on the gas range; money disappeared and reappeared; stones flew around; a cup started "dancing" on the table; the glass panes of the bookcase broke. On July 31 a priest came to bless the apartment. The same day an observer, who had no formal connection with the Freiburg Institute, was present and reported, among other observations, the disappearance of a coin. He then proceeded to do an "experiment with the poltergeist" (Roll) in the following way: After having observed some pennies flying around, he took ten of them and placed a plastic beaker over them. The beaker started to shake although no one was near the table, and some of the pennies disappeared and "came back" by dropping from the ceiling. The same thing happened with nuts in a bowl.

The case continued active, its character becoming even more aggressive and violent. From August 18 to 23 almost all of Thomas's clothing was cut or torn and in both the apartment of the Family H. and that of Thomas's aunts fires broke out, in each case during Thomas's presence. Once, more than 10 small fires broke out at the same time in the aunts' apartment.

Because of the violence of the case the police were called in. Under the pressure of a police examination Thomas confessed to having intentionally caused everything that happened. He even tried to explain how it had been done to fool the investigators. But the outside observer maintained that some phenomena could not be due to trickery, especially the so-called "experiments." Later Thomas withdrew his confession which he said he had made because of police pressure. He further stated that in reality he had no idea how the phenomena were produced. At this stage the Freiburg investigators were split into two parties, one believing in the reality of at least some of the RSPK phenomena, the other attributing the whole case to cheating. Since only one observer, and he not one of the trained staff investigators from the Institute, witnessed the alleged RSPK events, it is hard to evaluate the case in an unprejudiced way. Two factors contribute to the RSPK hypothesis:

(1) The patterns of the case were strikingly similar to other RSPK cases. Interesting in this respect is the fact that at the beginning the disturbances took place at the periphery of the apartment (the windows) and gradually "came into" it. This is a sometimes neglected pattern which often can be found in RSPK cases reported early in this century and is also described in Tizanés (1951) book.

(2) The results of Thomas's psychodiagnostic tests suggest that the withdrawal of his confession is more credible than the original confession of cheating.

The typical RSPK conducive psychodynamics are found in Thomas's situation. Mr. H. was unemployed and an alcoholic. Thomas was tested psychologically and neurologically in the Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Heidelberg. The neurological examination gave no pathological diagnosis. The EEG examination from November 3, 1976 showed a well developed alpha rhythm. In the occipital region a slightly arrhythmical EEG activity was found, but no changes during hyperventilation could be observed except for occasional generalized paroxysmic arrhythmic activity. The EEG was well within the expected standard. Thomas is a repressed and anxious boy, and for his age is relatively infantile and suffers from communication problems. But there are no indications of an organic disturbance of brain activity or of abnormalities of character. Thomas does not seem to fit into the picture of RSPK focal agents since he lacks the often observed personality pattern of wanting to be the center of attention (a pattern often attributed to the extraverted hysterical personality), and he has only very modest ego strength.

The Stühlingen Case (1977)

Of the four cases reported here the Stühlingen Case was the most extensively investigated. It is one of the very few cases where the RSPK activity is limited to appearances of water.

The phenomena started on June 6, 1977, when Mrs. A. noted that her bed was wet and thought that one of her daughters, Sabine (aged 12) or Heidi (aged 18), might be playing a joke on her. The fourth person living in the house was Mrs. A.'s husband. The family had moved into this newly built house only a few days earlier. Puddles of water then appeared in Mr. and Mrs. A.'s beds and later in Heidi's bed.

As in the preceding case the phenomena started at the walls of the house: Water appeared on the radiators and on the walls. During the case, pools and splashes of water were sometimes witnessed by persons outside the family. In the course of a few hours on June 16 and 17 puddles of water appeared about every five minutes. While Mrs. A. was cleaning the wet floor she reports having seen a water bubble which then splashed on her neck and face. During this time both Mr. A.'s bed and, more especially, Mrs. A.'s bed were among the main targets of the water occurrences. On June 16 puddles of water continued to appear for two hours after the water supply to the house had been cut off at the main.

On June 25 when I stayed in the house for a second time for a three day period, friends and relatives of the family visited the house so that sometimes 16 persons were there and a thorough investigation was impossible. During one day the appearance of a puddle was observed by Sabine and one of the visitors. A second visitor witnessed the same event but not as directly as the others. This instance has been reconstructed and documented and is one of the most convincing phenomena of the case. In a further stage of the investigation, after examining them thoroughly, I locked the rooms where most of the phenomena appeared. When I reopened them after some hours during which I had the keys constantly with me, new puddles of water were found in Mr. and Mrs. A.'s beds and on the floor of some rooms.

In the third stage of the investigation we installed three electronic cameras, monitors and video equipment, but unfortunately were not able to obtain usable video tapes of water appearances.

The water was analyzed chemically and proved to be identical to the water from the water pipes of the house. The phenomena happened only when Sabine and at least one other person were present in the house. Sabine, the focal person, sometimes reported "feeling" when the water appeared in some room. Since phenomena often took place in rooms where no person was present, the principal weakness of the case was the failure of the investigators to witness any convincing phenomena themselves. The strength of the case were instances of events witnessed by persons not belonging to the family and the appearance of water in locked rooms where cheating was impossible. Supporting

the RSPK hypothesis are the results of PK experiments on a Random Number Generator by Sabine while the case was still active. These results were extremely significant ($t = 6.066$; $p < .00000001$). After the RSPK activity ceased the results were within the chance range ($t = .3849$; $p = n.s.$).

The psychodiagnostic analysis of the family revealed that Sabine has an average to good intelligence. She has a strong need to put on a good front and here affective structure is extremely unstable. She experiences tensions as a result of her strong need to dominate and to achieve on the one hand, and a certain ego-weakness on the other. This inner disharmony is characterized by aggressive behavior such as insolence, a tendency to argue, an impulse to extend herself and an intense wish to succeed with her ideas, both of which needs are opposed by inferiority feelings, uncertainty, anxiety over new situations and a search for inner harmony. Her self-concept supports the results: She finds herself unattractive, not able to succeed with her ideas, unloved and not dominant. An important point is that Sabine feels herself dominated by an extremely despotic mother. To her the new house reflects her mother's extreme aggression, especially since, in the new house, Sabine has her own room and is no longer allowed to sleep in the bed with her parents as she often did before. Hence the RSPK phenomena aim at the destruction of the house and are especially oriented toward the beds of her parents.

There is another interesting feature of the case which is of hermeneutic value in the analysis of why the case was completely restricted to the appearance of water. Two things may account for this: Sabine passed critical stages of development during her "urethral phase" (Schulz-Henke, 1951). She suffered enuresis in order to get the feelings of security she too seldom got from her mother. Focal persons of other water RSPK cases have also suffered enuresis. And, finally, Sabine's mother had an accident during the fourth month of pregnancy in the course of which she nearly drowned. According to findings by Rottmann (1974) such a traumatic incident may later lead to a life crisis during which the child experiences a key situation similar to the mother's experience. Here, the mother's danger of physical separation from her husband by drowning is experienced as the daughter's danger of physical separation from her father for whom she had unconscious sexual desires. The reference person for both mother and daughter in this case is Mr. A. and the analytic "key" for both "drowning" and "water RSPK" is water.

An extensive evaluation of this case is given in other publications (Gruber, 1977, 1979).

The Bad Walsee Case (1978)

The Bad Walsee Case began in the spring of 1978 and lasted until September. A family consisting of a mother (39 years old), father (40 years old) and two children, Elvira (9) and Dietmar (11), lived in a small house in Bad Walsee. Once more the phenomena began on the outside: Tulips in

the garden were torn up and scattered over the garden and the water supply for the swimming pool was turned on. Later, raps were heard at the front door and at the windows. The children's toys disappeared and were later found hidden. The hooks for a tent in the garden were ripped out and a briefcase disappeared and reappeared in the father's *armoire*. Sometimes the children could not open doors which were unlocked and could not even be locked because all the keys had been removed. In addition, the children reported being touched by a black figure in the shape of a man. In one instance Dietmar was found tied to a tree. On another occasion, Dietmar was locked in the cupboard, the key to which was found far away under the stove. Once Elvira reported having been choked by some invisible person. Bruises later appeared on her throat. Among other phenomena, 100 Mark banknotes appeared in Dietmar's hand and disappeared when he let them drop.

Apparent RSPK phenomena were even reported at school when Dietmar's teacher found his lost school books in the classroom cabinet.

Since it was not possible for investigators from Freiburg to analyze this case in detail, we have to rely on reports from the family and from witnesses. The evaluation of the case is therefore extremely difficult. It was not even possible to administer psychodiagnostic tests to members of the family.

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As can be seen from these short accounts of recent German RSPK cases, we are always confronted with very difficult material, the evaluation of which often seems to be left to the discretionary decision of the investigator(s). And, indeed investigators often have different opinions about whether the RSPK activity is genuine or if it is overt fraud or "unconscious fraud" committed during some kind of dissociative state. These problems arise because of the structure inherent in RSPK cases which can be described as "imp-like" behavior. Moreover, much of the phenomena typical of the RSPK pattern is very similar to destructive "normal behavior."

From a careful analysis of RSPK cases it seems clear that the psychological material is most important. This should be integrated in a hermeneutic rather than a reductionist approach to RSPK cases. These cases are full of correspondences between intersubjective as well as intrasubjective psychological events and the structure of the reported phenomena. At this stage if we look at the correspondences between outer events and inner meaning, we do not even have to ask whether a phenomenon is really paranormal or simply "normal." What kind of importance to attach to the fact that psychokinetic events happen in a certain frame of correspondences between inner and outer mechanisms is a problem of interpretation. Progress in the study of RSPK cases can be expected from the type of study suggested by Feyerabend (1975) which is more like playing and free association than logical analysis.

But it is clear that whatever method we accept for the study of RSPK cases we have to face the problem of deciding whether we should treat a specific case as a genuine RSPK case or as a case where psychological factors interact with the physical environment to make it appear that PK events occur. It is important to make this distinction since there is almost no "absolutely convincing" RSPK case, and scepticism towards "good" cases is often found among investigators themselves or among the parapsychological community. But this should not keep us from analyzing RSPK cases. On the contrary, we should accept this uncertainty as a special RSPK pattern in the sense of a hermeneutic explanation.

Since RSPK cases are very rich in their various aspects (Hans Bender once labelled the study of RSPK cases the *via regia* into the study of parapsychology), we should be suspicious whenever something like a "law" or "cause" is reported to have been found. Not that such a law or cause may not exist, but all such approaches have the taste of reductionism and shorten the phenomenological reality of RSPK events. Contrasting such concepts with counter-concepts or making careful analysis of contradictory cases are ways to determine how useful such concepts are in explaining the mechanisms of RSPK events. (Gruber, 1978; Feyerabend, 1975).

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The Parapsychology Convention: Two Views

ONE VIEW

Dr. Ralph Locke, Visiting Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Consultant at the Psychical Research Foundation, takes a look at the Twenty-second Annual Convention of the Parapsychological Association. The meeting, hosted by John F. Kennedy University, Orinda, California, took place August 15 through August 18, 1979, at nearby St. Mary's College, Moraga, California.

The intellectual and institutional fabric of parapsychology, as embodied in the PA conference, is of a particular kind. Let us approach the subject by using a device of literature and social science—the position of the Stranger, or, if you like, the Martian as a popular version of the former. With little or no knowledge of what is intrinsically meaningful yet which is obviously shared by the participants, the Stranger may sometimes discern lines of convergence and discontinuity in the social and intellectual worlds of the conference community.

The peculiar self-consciousness and conviction which mark those who advocate parapsychology seem matched by a profound circumspection. Enthusiasm for the subject of parapsychology expressed in symposia such as Synchronicity

and Psi, Psi and Scientific Method, and papers presented in areas like Micro PK Studies and Psi and Personality is matched by profound fearfulness. This attitude, best described as a "siege mentality," has several expressions. To paraphrase the eminent French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, the insistent words in the (unconscious) hidden agenda were "science," "paradigm," "image," "subjects and persons," and "publics." The grammar of concern in parapsychology is writ large with these elements and not with the discrete topics listed. It is a language which contains enthusiasm and turns it inward to form a certain parochialism and yet a powerful camaraderie.

To come to this year's PA conference as a non-parapsychologist, a non-practitioner of "psychic" specializations, and as a non-sensitive, all of these being part of the device of suspension of belief for the moment, is to hear the grammar of parapsychology as a struggle for self-discipline, "scientific" autonomy, and human relevance. In many ways, then, its expression of interests and vicissitudes parallel those of the social sciences which have endured the assaults of established science, various communities served and political partisanism. Yet, parapsychology is reluctant to look at the history, lessons, and contributions of these areas. "Autonomy" has been translated to mean a new and viable **paradigm** which will serve as the impetus for respectability and vindication. However, viability is ever threatened by the barriers imposed by a siege mentality. Throughout the conference and in the Presidential Address by John Palmer, the need for a "new paradigm," the obviousness of "paradigm clashes," and "paradigm inadequacies" were matters mentioned in epidemic proportions, yet a close listening revealed little agreement in the use of "paradigm" or familiarity with its current status in the philosophy of science. "Paradigm" is often invoked by interpreters of Thomas Kuhn's work, but seldom used now by serious philosophers of science, or by Kuhn himself who is now exploring "disciplinary matrices" and "exemplars" as the hallmarks of scientific effort.

Undoubtedly, the peculiar mixture of needs for scientific autonomy (a new paradigm) and respectability and acceptance breeds both conservatism and radical creativity. During the conference, the research papers reflected more of the former while the roundtables and symposia evidenced the latter. Moreover, it seems that the longer parapsychology struggles with these social expressions of its grammar, the more likely it is that a "breakthrough" in the conceptualization of the subject of psi research and a correlated methodology will come from a field of endeavor outside of the currently recognized parapsychological community.

By way of grounding some of these observations, let me comment on two speeches of some importance—the Presidential Address, "Parapsychology as a Probabilistic Science: Facing the Implications" by the incumbent president, John Palmer, and "Holeness, Wholeness, and No Thingness," by Karl Pribram. The former could be best characterized as a strident attempt to interpret the subject and method of parapsychology in probabilistic terms

(though never Bayesian!), to demonstrate that there are indeed "paradigms" in parapsychology (meaning theories), and to map a future for parapsychology based on the models of established scientific endeavor **and** the entrepreneurial success of "scientific astrology." Indeed, the address would have better served the PA if it attended to the latter, specifically in terms of exploring what parapsychology needs in terms of innovative theorizing and its relation to the world we (variously) know.

Karl Pribram's speech was a sharp contrast to Palmer's. Pribram, a neuropsychologist, asks different questions of the human organism, as one might expect, from those posed by most parapsychologists. It is a difference in attitude and education. Pribram does not separate his knowledge of the everyday from his technical mastery; they interpenetrate in a framework of considerable, indeed phenomenological, depth. His theory of consciousness, based on a hologram logic, is a theory of the social and psychological worlds as well. The **difference**, to invoke Gregory Bateson, between the PA mainstream and Pribram-like approaches is everything. The former operates from a logic of defense and emulation of institutions while the latter operates from the philosophical question, "What **can** we know about **man** based on what we know about man?" The difference is also a **distance**. Pribram may be wrong in theoretical detail. His style caused ruffles: It is a mixture of erudition, panache, egotism, and provocation. However, the style simply seemed to amplify the rejection of content by many PA members and luminaries. Pribram was not rushed at the end of his speech; he was rushed away from.

What does all this demonstrate? Firstly, it called for a revision of one of my primary assumptions—namely, that I was the only Martian there. Pribram landed at the PA banquet just as Klatu landed in Washington in "The Day the Earth Stood Still." The categories hardened, stomachs tensed, and outrage seemed the most common response from the elite. The second outcome is that it is clear that the PA operates like the institutions which it vilifies—"established science"—at least in not separating style from content and intellectual from social political interests. So, the conclusion has to be, for me, that parapsychologists often look through the other end of the telescope—the smaller things are, the further away, the more manageable (and meaningless) they are. Turning the telescope around means first seeing the differences noted above and the grammar of concern which supports them. Not the least of our concerns, then, is that these issues appear as explicit themes in future PA and other conferences.

A SECOND VIEW

Dr. Michael Grosso, Professor of Parapsychology and Religion at Jersey City State College and a PA member, presents his somewhat different view of the Convention.

Instead of offering any critical or studiously objective remarks, I choose here to record a personal view—the overtones and images that linger from an experience. I believe it may be of value on occasion for parapsychologists to communicate among themselves by means of that famous image-loving, logic-loathing, right hemisphere of the brain. I have no doubt there were some discordant and unpleasant moments for others, but for me the trip was “up” all the way. To begin with, nature seemed the ally of our cause, perched in the undulant hills of Moraga, we presented papers and shared symposia cloistered in the halls of St. Mary’s College, far from noise pollution and gasoline madness. At dawn the fog drifting on the hills was quick to dissipate before the bright rays of the Californian sun. Walking about and just breathing were a delight. Perhaps because of a certain contagion of enthusiastic psychic “energy,” I slept little but felt no fatigue.

Nature was even more obliging. One evening Alan Vaughan remarked to me that some time ago he dreamt he was at a place with Rex Stanford during an earthquake. At nine the next morning there was an earthquake—minor but detectable on the Richter scale. This confirmed Alan’s premonitory dream, but not so forcibly as to cause us any inconvenience. How agreeably nature behaved toward our convention!

The human environment was no less congenial. There was no psi missing in my encounters with persons; everywhere I met with a varied and convivial flow of humanity. Somebody remarked that Ray Hyman, one of the sterner critics of the field, said he found the company at the Convention pleasanter and more relaxed than at customary conventions. One explanation of this could be the openness of mind that must prevail in a community of persons devoted to the study of the oddballs and outlaws of nature. Would it be far-fetched to see some political import embedded in the pursuit of parapsychology? I would like to imagine that consorting with psi breeds the habit of tolerance. I hasten to add, of course, that this is an image I choose to entertain and not a fact about the way things necessarily are.

Having noted some impressions of the natural and human ambience of this year’s PA Convention, I offer some remarks on a tendency that seemed to pervade the intellectual atmosphere. This being my first PA Convention there is no way to make a comparison, but I seemed to catch certain winds of change blowing, faint rumors of insurrection; as Bob Dylan used to incant back in the ‘60’s, the times and the paradigms they are a-changin’. However, I think it fair to say that more cautious observers, perhaps more seasoned and weather-beaten psi-hunters, were less impressed, at least less willing to be caught up in misleading enthusiasm. For instance, Karlis Osis likened the current preoccupation with

new paradigm talk to periods when **fourth dimension** shibboleths stirred up the expectations of psychical researchers. On the other hand, after the standing ovation to John Palmer’s Presidential Address subsided, Laura Dale remarked, “Why, it’s as though there had been a landing on the moon!”

Well, what is this new world the space ship of parapsychology is about to land upon? A clue to the nature of the ‘79 Zeitgeist was Rhea White’s eloquent paper, “On the Genesis of Research Hypotheses in Parapsychology.” This paper, a little like John Palmer’s Presidential Address, seemed to trigger a response from deeper levels of consciousness, levels perhaps ordinarily repressed among members of a scientific community. Her paper, in substance, argued for the need to plunge courageously into the depths of our personal needs, passions, intuitions and dreams for coming up with new ways of exploring the mysteries of psi. Let subjectivity be the guide and inspiration, she proclaimed, to help us break the stranglehold of “stuffy conservatism” which has impeded progress in the field. Well might this have sent a chill into the bones of the more conservative devotees of scientific method. Yet in a way even the reflections of that austere and lucid philosopher-scientist, John Beloff, seemed to corroborate Rhea White’s Brunoesque tribute to heroic enthusiasm; for in his paper, “Using the Scientific Method to Probe the Limits of Science,” he pointed to psi as probably indicative of a fundamental discontinuity in nature which, in turn, is suggestive of the limits of scientific endeavor. What there is may just exceed what we can scientifically know. At any rate, let me take the advice of Rhea White and give voice to an intuition; my first thought on lapping up the waves of applause to her paper was this: “She’s hit on the nerve of a repressed ‘religious’ instinct in this audience.”

This motif which legitimizes the rights of subjectivity and imposes limits on human reason and scientific method—a motif familiar to philosophy in the thought of Plato, Aquinas, Kant and others—ran through the convention in a variety of guises. Palmer’s Address, for instance, stressed the notion that parapsychology is a probabilistic science—a way of noting certain restrictions on the epistemic capacities of parapsychology. Moreover, we heard him hesitantly endorse a paradigm shift emphasizing such constructs as “conformance,” “correspondence,” and, by association, that catchword of fascinating fuzziness, “synchronicity.” What this would imply, Palmer asserts, is a possible expansion of areas of parapsychological study including such intellectually untouchable topics as astrology! Astrology, however, is historically linked to a magical world view where thought is genuinely creative, has causal efficacy, and is, as Beloff would put it, an autonomous principle of nature. And surely, if PK is a fact, we do indeed live in a magical universe. It was the making of this implication slightly more explicit than usual that was in part the cause of the excitement that seemed to be reverberating in the convention; likewise this is, and has been, the cause behind much of the violent antipathy to the field among people

who feel more at home in a tidier, more colorless and controllable universe.

The great change of paradigm called the "Renaissance" completely undermined the centeredness of man and philosophically destroyed the concepts that were at least consistent with a magical world-view. After Copernicus, man was flung into a world of infinite possibilities, a centerless universe—where, as Nicholas of Cusa remarked, the center was everywhere and the circumference nowhere. Pascal, an inventor of the theory of probability, freaked out in the face of this new infinity, this new loss of the human scale. Bruno was so intoxicated with it that he failed to be sufficiently troubled by the flames of his own execution at the hands of the Inquisition. But in the end Galileo settled the issue with the help of a new tool—the telescope. The materiality of the planets was now observed; astrology had to wake up from its dream. Religion and the inner needs of man fell apart into the ephemera of secondary qualities. The old magico-religious world view afforded men the means to "resonate" with the cosmos; the new, scientific-Cartesian outlook reduced the individual to an isolated atom of consciousness.

But now it seems parapsychology restores causal efficacy to those fallen internal states, those saddened and weary wraiths of the world, our thoughts. Our thoughts, it would seem, **make things happen** after all. Unbound from the shackles of time and space, freed even from what Bertrand Russell called the "unconscious power" of matter, I am able now to begin to revise the image of my "self" and thus to learn to inhabit my world anew. The scientific revolution of the Renaissance liberated space from narrow anthropomorphic projections and resulted in what Alexander Koyre named in the title of one of his books—a transition "From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe." But along with this opening up of new physical worlds, spaces, and energies, there arose a philosophic prejudice against mind, a thinned out version of soul; from this, consciousness, even more vaporous and elusive, was spawned into our midst. Then even consciousness was tossed into the limbo of unreality and reached the climax of its impotence in metaphysical behaviorism. Unfortunately, this sort of thing is apt to lead to very dull conventions.

So an exciting reversal may be in the offing. It is perhaps a new phase in the expansion of the scientific mind. Some future Koyre will write a book called: "From the Closed Mind to the Infinite Consciousness: A Study of the Parapsychological Revolution."

Reviews

PHILOSOPHY AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY

edited by Jan Ludwig

(Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1978. 454 pp. \$16.95).

Reviewed by L. Duane Willard

Dr. Willard is Chairman of the Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

It is not difficult to justify the publication of this collection of essays on parapsychology. There is rapidly growing interest among the public at large and among intellectuals in such things as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis. Paralleling this interest, of course, has been a proliferation of literature on the paranormal. The present volume brings together essays from various thinkers defending or rejecting parapsychological claims. In his introductory essay editor Ludwig points out quite correctly the tendency of philosophers to regard the data of parapsychology as merely support for or against a particular philosophical perspective and to overlook the possibility that parapsychology has some intrinsic philosophical significance. This is "the key mistake" (p. 19) which has been made by philosophers, he says, a mistake which it is hoped his collection of papers will help to remedy.

The book is nicely arranged. Section I contains five essays expressing what is believed by their authors to be the relevance, or the lack thereof, of parapsychology to philosophy. Section II includes papers devoted to the topics of intentional fraud and unintentional mistake and to the scientific propriety or impropriety of experiments conducted in the parapsychology field. The essays in Section III treat various linguistic and conceptual issues arising in parapsychology. Section IV deals with the topic of precognition, a notion which appears to play havoc with our ideas of time and causation. This is the only section that considers just one specific form of ESP. Section V contains papers concerning the bearing which parapsychology might or might not have on theories of mind and personality. The text closes with a statement by William James, cautious but sympathetic to the parapsychological endeavor.

However, editor Ludwig does not include any material on the question of survival. This exclusion of such an important topic undoubtedly will be surprising to readers of *THETA*, who might well expect to see in a collection of philosophical essays on the paranormal some papers dealing with areas relevant to the topic of life after death—e.g., mediumistic communications, memories of earlier lives,

apparitions, out-of-body experiences, and possessions. But it must be noted that Ludwig has put the book together on the assumption that the best evidence available for or against parapsychological phenomena is evidence produced in scientifically controlled experiments. He suggests that parapsychology, though having "no well-defined and widely accepted body of theory which serves to characterize it and to distinguish it as a scientific discipline," (p. 22) nevertheless should be considered as at least a fledgling and potentially reputable science. As a discipline with some scientific standing, parapsychology is as much subject to philosophical evaluation of its concepts, theories, and methods as are disciplines such as biology, physics, or sociology. "My general position," he says, "is perhaps a restrictive one: If no merit is to be found in the claims of scientific parapsychology, then philosophers can well afford to pay scant attention to the claims made with regard to non-scientific evidence of parapsychological phenomena. Parapsychology must, in my view, stand or fall on scientific grounds." (pp. 23-24) Given this approach, it may not be, after all, very surprising that Ludwig would exclude material dealing with life after death. For if we think of survival in terms of the immortality of an immaterial soul, this would perhaps take us outside the scientific method. Whether human beings "have" a soul does not seem answerable on empirical grounds. And "even if one assumes the existence of individual souls, what possible empirical evidence could demonstrate their post-mortem survival for the infinite, or even the indefinite, future?" (p. 24) The question of the soul and its survival, Ludwig notes, is a metaphysical, not a scientific, question. On the other hand, if we think of survival, not in terms of a soul, but as the "continuation for a transient and finite period of fragments of an ante-mortem personality," (p. 24) parapsychology in principle might provide some evidence for it. However, "designing a suitable experiment to obtain such evidence would not be easy, and few, if any, such experiments have been attempted in the history of scientific parapsychology." (p. 25) Thus, he claims, the possible survival of personality fragments "is not an issue which lies at the heart of scientific parapsychology and therefore it is not of fundamental importance to the philosophy of parapsychology." (p. 25)

Now it may be tempting to interpret Ludwig as holding the view, rather prevalent among some philosophers today, that whatever cannot be placed under scientific categories is not, or cannot be, of philosophical interest and importance. And it could be that he holds that view. But it does not seem that what he says necessarily implies such a view. What he says suggests that all the claims of parapsychology as a science are subject to philosophical scrutiny. But it does not follow from this that there are no philosophically interesting and important issues which lie outside science—e.g., the soul, God, free will, the mind-body problem, ethics, aesthetics. I do not think Ludwig is claiming that metaphysical issues, including survival, are all bogus. So I do not take his exclusion of work by philosophers on the survival

question as meaning that this question is philosophically insignificant.

Still, it seems to me that Ludwig should have included some essays on survival. Several things written by philosophers and listed in the excellent bibliography provided at the end of the book would have served well. It appears to me that techniques such as cross-correspondence and proxy-sittings used in controlled experiments with mediums, though perhaps not as sophisticated as various kinds of testing procedures used in connection with telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis, are not completely without scientific credibility. Moreover, Ludwig does allow that parapsychology might be able to bring forth some empirical grounds for belief in survival of personality fragments, in spite of his contention that to date survival experiments have produced "evidence" of a very questionable nature. And finally, since he includes essays intended to bring conceptual clarity to various areas of parapsychology, it is difficult to understand why he would not consider it important to include the survival area, since it is without doubt deserving of conceptual analysis and clarification and has received attention by some reputable philosophers.

On the whole, however, the results of Ludwig's effort are commendable. The authors of the essays include some of the most competent advocates and critics—Beloff, Brier, Broad, Ducasse, Flew, Mundle, Murphy, Price, Rhine, Scriven, Soal, and Wheatley. The book is a very worthwhile collection. Indeed, as interest in parapsychology continues to grow, it may be widely used as a textbook.

STALKING THE WILD PENDULUM: THE MECHANICS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by Itzhak Bentov

(New York: E.P. Dutton, 1977. 155 pp. \$4.95)

Reviewed by Brian Millar

Dr. Millar conducted parapsychological research in Edinburgh for some years under the aegis of Dr. John Beloff and is now continuing his investigations at the University of Utrecht. His special area of interest is the "observational" theories.

An actor once accidentally picked up the telephone directory instead of his script. When his agent called the actor commented, "I don't think much of the plot, but man, what a cast!" Much the same could be said of Itzhak Bentov's *Stalking the Wild Pendulum*. The up and coming stars such as the big bang, black holes, white holes (time-reversed black holes) and holograms as well as altered states of consciousness mingle with the old favorites, auras, interpenetrating planes of existence, nature spirits and gods of

various varieties: guests artists such as Don Juan and *The Secret Life of Plants* also put in a brief appearance.

So that the reader can form some general impression of the progressing story-line I shall quote three typical passages: ". . . 'what is it that vibrates within the quantum.' It is a unit of pure consciousness that vibrates there." (p. 65) ". . . we have the other consciousness that inhabits the planet and uses it as a temporary residence. It is an enormous consciousness, and the sum total of mankind's consciousness makes up only a fraction of this great consciousness or being. This being. . . will cause environmental changes to stimulate evolution in certain directions." (p. 119) "The creation of a universe starts by the separation of a part of the void, which is outlined by a sheath of light to form an ovoid shell. Then polarization of protomatter occurs. A discharge passes through the two poles of the ovoid and sets the protomatter moving." (p. 129)

It is clear Mr. Bentov is a follower of the hermetic tradition. The message on the emerald tablets "As above so below" is one of the leitmotifs of the book. He is, however, a modern—a hermetic with a screwdriver. One might think that such a radical viewpoint must be supported by strong evidence. Our author, however, takes the path of theory, using practical work merely to illustrate his points.

His first point is that ". . . even our smallest, most insignificant actions will be broadcast far and wide and thus influence something or someone—whether that something or someone is aware of it or not." (p. 9) He gives several illustrations: "When we think, our brains produce rhythmic electric currents. With their magnetic components, they spread out into space at the velocity of light. . . . They all mingle to produce enormous interference patterns, spreading out and away from the planet." (p. 23) He later suggests ELF waves as the carrier for telepathy.

Examples such as this illustrate the kinds of half-truths which characterize the more scientific sounding part of this book. Bentov concedes that the signals are weak but seems curiously unaware of the role of "noise." As anyone who has ever used a radio receiver can testify, weak stations are not separated from the obscuring "static" by simply turning up the volume. This is true not just of radio but of any kind of communication channel. The consequence is that although a transmission may go on forever, though getting weaker and weaker, the decipherable information it carries becomes less and less as the signal gets buried in the "dismal universal hiss." Normal EEG signals, for example, drop below the noise level within a few centimeters from our heads. The electrodynamic fields caused by the motion of our bodies (p. 29) fare rather better, extending perhaps a full three feet.

As an example of an organism reacting to an extremely weak signal Bentov cites (p. 22) an experiment in which oysters were transported 1000 miles west (New York to Chicago) in opaque containers. Oysters open and close their valves in rhythm with the tides and when first examined these were keeping New York time. After some weeks,

however, even though kept in an artificially lighted laboratory, their rhythms shifted to Chicago time. Bentov ascribes this effect to the gravitational attraction of the moon. The size of the gravitational differential, a few ten millionths of the earth's own pull, makes me very skeptical of this explanation. What is the status of this experiment? Have other workers repeated it? How well controlled were conditions? Could the oysters have been reacting to the day-time activity in the laboratory, or the temperature, or even the operation of the air-conditioning? If the oysters really were reacting to such a tiny gravitational change, direct tests should be possible. Small accelerations produced by mechanical means could disrupt the oysters' cycle or even pull them into other rhythms. Bentov's interpretation is highly speculative and certainly not the open and shut matter he implies.

A good illustration of misleading presentation is given in his discussion of holography: "It is nature's way of storing information. There is already evidence that our brains store information in a holographic form." (p. 15) Is there? If so, it would be nice if he referenced it. He continues: "This kind of storage device is the most compact known in Nature. An example of this is the genetic code carried in our chromosomes." But in DNA the information is stored more like beads on a string than in the manner of holography!

Bentov's investigations eventually drive him to the same conclusion as his predecessors, namely that all is oscillatory motion. He therefore examines the classic oscillator, the pendulum, and comes to the startling conclusion that at the end of every swing, when the pendulum is "stopped" it actually dashes around the whole universe and collapses back before anyone has a chance to see it gone (thus the title of the book). When this happens to a human being he is imagined as taking his consciousness with him. Of course, one normally does this about seven times a second and doesn't become aware of it. At this point the reader may begin to wonder, as I did, whether he is having his leg pulled (seven times a second perhaps); but no—Bentov seems to be quite serious: at least he spends the rest of the book building superstructures on this basis.

According to the uncertainty principle, if the velocity (strictly momentum) of a system is known with complete accuracy then its position is completely indeterminate; in other words it may be anywhere. We know the exact velocity of a pendulum at the point of changing direction—it is zero. Thus Mr. Bentov considers that at the time it may be chasing about the universe. However, we also know it has velocity zero for no time. We may rephrase "We don't know at all where it is for no time" to "We know pretty well where it is all the time." Mr. Bentov should consult with Alice: she reported "nobody on the road" and was told she must have very good eyes indeed to see nobody since it is hard enough to see somebody!

As Mr. Bentov comments in his introduction—after the first four chapters—" . . . it's all downhill. . . ." Consequently

I shall spend no more time on his increasingly extravagant notions.

I am left with one question—How could Bentov write such stuff? It may be a joke: certainly his crisp, humorous presentation testifies to this possibility. On balance, however, I do not think that this is the case. In Tiller's preface we are told that Bentov took up "the regular practice of meditation. . . . This was followed by the design of experiential journeys into the microcosm and macrocosm of the universe." Mr. Bentov discloses that "Much of this information has come through intuitive insight." (p. 1) I suspect it is really his belief that one can reliably answer objective questions about the universe by means of meditation. I wish it were so. Alas, for the most part, such revelation is counterfeit, culled from the recesses of memory. These aberrations are well known in the meditative traditions. In Mr. Bentov's case I would guess his mind was well stocked with esoteric lore as well as with modern technology.

A reviewer quoted on the back cover comments that this book is "the creative process at work." I agree, but the typical creative process is the dreaming of dreams. Any insight we think we have gained must subsequently be put to test in the fire of critical examination. Only this can decide whether an intuition is an adamant truth or if it has no more substance than a wisp of smoke. It is this reality-testing step which is conspicuously absent in Bentov's book.

PITFALLS IN HUMAN RESEARCH: TEN PIVOTAL POINTS

by **Theodore X. Barber**

(NY: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1976. 117 pp. \$6.95)

Reviewed by Debra H. Weiner

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When I first read the title of this book I assumed it spoke to problems in conducting behavioral ("human") research. After finishing the book I wondered if Barber was punning and was actually referring to the fallibility of **humans** doing research. Research is not as cut-and-dried as the introductory chapters of science texts portray it. It is like asking a question of a literal-minded pantomimist: one must phrase the question very carefully in order to ask exactly what one intends, and one must learn to decipher the response without misreading the message. (The first phase corresponds to designing an experiment; the latter with analyzing and interpreting the results.) Backing his assertions with examples and hard data, Barber clearly and concisely outlines ten key points in this process in which an error can lead to a mistaken picture of reality. It is important to emphasize here that these errors do not lead to a

"malfunctioning" experiment the way a mistake in auto mechanics might result in an inoperable car. Unfortunately, flawed experiments do provide "answers," answers whose lack of validity may go undetected. The consequences of this fact are critical when one realizes the extent to which organizational policies and our view of nature are influenced by research findings.

Barber begins by distinguishing between the roles of the investigator (who has responsibility for the overall design and analysis) and the experimenter (who "runs" subjects through an experimental procedure). At times these roles are unified in one individual though in psychology, and to a lesser extent in parapsychology, they are often not. Barber focusses somewhat more heavily on investigator than experimenter errors as the former have received less attention from psychologists.

The first "effect" (as Barber tactfully calls them) is familiar to readers of Thomas Kuhn. The "paradigm effect" causes a researcher to resist new discoveries and influences the way he or she approaches a problem or perceives the results. The second effect regards the influence of the experimental design. He notes, for example, that comparisons of two conditions will produce different results depending on whether **one** group of subjects experiences **both** conditions or two separate groups each experience only one of the conditions. The relevance of this comment is demonstrated by a recent example from parapsychology in which subjects scored well below chance level in the control condition and then seemed "significantly [to] improve" when they scored at chance in the experimental condition (Jackson, *et. al*, 1977).

The third pitfall involved loose procedures that do not specify to the experimenter what should be done regarding less formal portions of the experiment or unexpected circumstances. The fourth covers numerous sins that have been committed during data analysis, ranging from arithmetic errors to the failure to report results that don't go the way they were "supposed" to.

The next topic is an emotional one for scientists: investigator fraud. Noting that some fraud is semiconscious—the "trimming off" of unwanted material rather than the constructing of results out of whole cloth—Barber presents examples of both types and discusses motivations for honesty as well as for cheating. (His treatment of fraud in parapsychology is one of the most balanced and unbiased ones I have seen to date.)

The remaining pitfalls signal danger for the experimenter rather than the investigator. Some are errors—failure to follow procedures, systematic misrecording of data, cheating—while others speak to the influence of their personal characteristics on subjects' responses. (For example, the results of a survey of racial attitudes will differ if the interviewer is black or white.) Barber discusses at length the "unintentional expectancy effect," the idea that experimenters can unconsciously influence subjects to respond the way they expect them to. This "Rosenthal effect," named after its primary proponent, has received much

attention in psychology and has been studied for its influence on psi performance. Barber criticizes for violation of proper experimental procedures the research by Rosenthal and his followers purportedly demonstrating this effect. His attack is devastating but a bit overstated, and I wondered if he was reacting against the publicity this work has received. The book concludes with a set of 13 recommendations for researchers and the remark that these pitfalls do not invalidate the scientific method as a useful way to obtain knowledge about human nature.

As a researcher I enjoyed the book very much, but it is an important book for the non-experimentalist as well. In today's society we are continually bombarded with the "findings" of recent research and I have personally encountered examples in the popular press of conclusions being improperly drawn from the results. (To give an example, a local radio station presented the fact that proportionately more mental patients are single than married, and then proclaimed that "getting married makes you sane." As any first-year statistics student knows, correlation is not causation. Apparently it did not occur to the reporter that the result could be due to the fact that people do not want to marry someone with psychological disorders.) As mentioned earlier, the consequences of uncritically accepting research findings are considerable. *Pitfalls in Human Research*, accompanied by another favorite, *How to Lie with Statistics* (Huff, 1954), will provide the layperson with the skills to separate real information from illusion.

References

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THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE TAPE RECORDER

by D. J. Ellis

(Pulborough, West Sussex, England: D.J. Ellis, 1978, 161 pp. \$5.00)

Reviewed by Joyce Berger

Joyce Berger is Associate Editor of THETA and Research Assistant at the Psychical Research Foundation.

D. J. Ellis was awarded the Perrot-Warwick Studentship at Trinity College, Cambridge, in order to permit him to investigate the so-called "Raudive" voices, i.e., voice extras on tape recordings, defined as "mental or physical phenomena which seem prima facie to suggest (a) the existence of supernormal powers of cognition or action in human beings in their present life, or, (b) the existence of the human mind after bodily death." The book itself is comprised of the reports Ellis made in the course of his research.

At the beginning the author was quite willing to accept that the voices were paranormal; as he continued his study he became more and more disillusioned.

There was, for example, a tape which was supposed to have convinced Sir Robert Mayer of survival and as a result of which he financed the publication of *Breakthrough* by Konstantin Raudive, the book that introduced the "voices" to the English-speaking world. Neither the author nor Mr. Raymond A. Cass, a hearing aid specialist and himself a successful recorder of the voices could hear anything at all on that tape.

One of the most famous tapes was recorded by Dr. Raudive in the author's presence. Raudive, who received voices in several languages and in combinations of these languages, had asked for a message in Russian from Romani Nimowald. The recording contained voices which Raudive interpreted as "Glaube du Cedin" (German: Believe you, Cedin), "Romani Nimowald zamuchils" (Russian: Romani Nimowald is exhausted/tormented to death) and "Ich folgu you tonight" (German and English: I follow you tonight). Ellis, however, learned through students at Cambridge, that what had been recorded was the following English language broadcast of Radio Luxembourg: "Hello, this is Kid Jensen reminding you about 'Dimensions.' Later on tonight on 208: soft Rock, hard Rock, Jazz and Blues. It's all for you, tonight, at one o'clock." Interestingly, Mr. Ellis reports that it is still easier for him to hear "Romani Nimowald zamuchils" than "reminding you about 'Dimensions.'"

The author rules out fraud but not delusion and concludes: "There is thus no reason to postulate anything but natural causes: indistinct fragments of radio transmissions, mechanical noises and unnoted remarks, aided by imaginative guesswork and wishful thinking, to explain the 'voice phenomenon.'"

For those who still may wish to try their luck at recording the voices, there are detailed explanations of the various techniques used.

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Reviewed by Joyce Berger

BOOKS

HAUNTINGS

by Peter Underwood

(London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1977. 255 pp. \$5.95)

As indicated by the book's sub-title, "New Light on the Greatest True Ghost Stories of the World," the author, a long-time ghost hunter and member of the Society for Psychical Research, has re-examined ten celebrated cases of hauntings. Those which are probably most familiar to our readers would be: The Cheltenham ("Morton") Ghost, the Mystery at Versailles and the Borley Hauntings. The "Morton" ghost is dismissed as having been a living person, probably the mistress of the head of the household! Miss Moberley and Miss Jourdain, the author believes, merely saw a rehearsal of a *tableau vivant* at Versailles. As to the mysteries of Borley, Mr. Underwood thinks that, although many of the reports of strange happenings at Borley can be dismissed, of all of the celebrated cases of haunting "it stands alone in the annals of psychical research as a

continuing problem for the materialist and an exciting challenge for the psychical researcher."

*Cf. *THETA*, 1979, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 17-19; No. 4, p. 19.

MEDITATION AND THE ART OF DYING

by Pandit Usharbudh Arya

(Honesdale, PA; The Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy, 1979. 179 pp. \$4.95)

Pandit Arya describes his book as "an introduction to the Immortal Light of the death-conquering yogis." We must talk of death, sing of death, meditate on death. Through kundalini yoga we realize the immortality of the spirit and through laya yoga we learn to dissolve material attachments including attachment to the physical body. The yogi, by conquering the various systems within the personality, masters the death process itself. We are told that those of us who have not achieved this mastery can still purify "our karma through right knowledge, thought, word and deed," and can die "to our physical self daily in deep meditation, which is the awareness of the pure, immortal, spiritual Self that 'I am.'"

LAST LETTER TO THE PEBBLE PEOPLE: "Aldie Soars"

by Virginia Hine

(Santa Cruz, CA: Unity Press, 1979. 159 pp. \$5.95)

Alden Hine was 54 years old when he was told that he had inoperable lung cancer. He died 15 months later. He had come to believe that his disease was of his own making and that he could choose life or death. He chose death—"benevolent death," as he called it. The author, Alden Hine's wife, movingly recounts how she and those who loved him came to accept his decision, made peace with him and with themselves and let him go.

Alden Hine chose to die at home. Those who had cooperated to try to help him live when he first learned he had cancer now united to help him die. Upon Aldie's death, all who were with him experienced a "magnificent high," a joy and a release. "[D]eath," we are told, "is a necessary part of love."

JOURNALS

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Vol. 49, No. 775, March, 1978. The Society for Psychical Research, 1 Adam & Eve Mews, London W86UG

"A Cross-Cultural Study of Beliefs in Out-of-the-Body Experiences, Waking and Sleeping," by Dean Shiels

A survey of cultures located in every world area and representing all technological levels other than the advanced industrial level

reveals that the belief in OBE's is nearly universal and that their meaning to these various cultures is strikingly similar. Moreover, "social control, crisis and dream theories were found to be inadequate (at best) in explaining the occurrence of OBE beliefs." The importance of the study of OBE's as they relate to the question of survival is also pointed out.

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Vol. 73, No. 4, October 1979. The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., 5 West 73rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10023

"The Survival of Personality in a Mind-Dependent World," by Michael Grosso

This article is based on "two assumptions: that if survival occurs, (a) it will be survival of some form of consciousness and (b) it will occur in a form that is mind-dependent. . . ." The author suggests that death might be a " 'splitting' of the nuclear body-ego followed by an 'explosion' of consciousness," with the "explosion" varying according to the individual. This view, it is suggested, might explain the unevenness of mediumistic communications. It is pointed out that this kind of survival, i.e., an expansion or explosion of consciousness instead of the survival of a unique personality, would be as repugnant to the average person as is the idea of annihilation and might explain the reluctance of parapsychologists to investigate survival.

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Vol. 50, No. 781, September, 1979. The Society for Psychical Research, 1 Adam & Eve Mews, London W86UG

"The Alleged Haunting of Borley Rectory," by Iris M. Owen and Paulene Mitchell.

Many who have investigated "The Most Haunted House in England" (as Harry Price called Borley Rectory) have concluded that the phenomena which occurred there from 1930 to 1935 during the incumbency of Rev. Lionel Foyster were caused fraudulently by his wife, Marianne. It is therefore particularly interesting to read this interview with Marianne who is now 80 years old and lives in Canada. Marianne claims that, with the possible exception of some slight poltergeist activity (and even this could have been staged), the supposed phenomena were all manufactured or invented by her husband who was "writing a work of fiction with the specific intention of making money." When Edwin Whitehouse, Rev. Foyster's close friend who was either the focus of the poltergeist activity or its creator, left the village and Rev. Foyster himself became bedridden, the phenomena ceased.

Déjà Vu

Walter Leaf

Reprinted from Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, June, 1903, Part 46, pp. 53-61. Permission granted by the Society for Psychical Research, 1 Adam and Eve Mews, Kensington, London W86UG, England.

Review by Walter Leaf of F.W.H. Myers' Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death, which was published in 1903, 2 years after Myers' death. Walter Leaf (1852-1927) was a member of the Society for Psychical Research and was involved, both as organizer and sitter, in the SPR's 1889-90 investigations of Mrs. Leonore Piper.

It is hard to know the best point of view from which to approach Myers's great work...

Myers's aim throughout was above all ethical; his life's task was to give such a scientific proof of a future life as should provide a dominating motive for the conduct of this life: and it is by this standard alone that he would have wished to be judged. I propose therefore to devote myself almost entirely to the later chapters in which he sums up his conclusions from this point of view, and to indicate exactly how far I find myself convinced, and where I have to leave him, being unable to follow the argument with him to his end. The whole question must be for every one of us eminently a personal one, and apologies are hardly called for if I endeavour to place a personal view on record where no general concord is to be expected for many years to come.

Unfortunately the portion of the book which is in this respect the most vital is precisely that which its author's death left incomplete, and we lack the final revision of

the ultimate synthesis which we seek with the deepest interest from a mind so acute, so logical, and so strenuous. We have indeed much to be grateful for. In dealing with evidence which is at once disparate and voluminous, the mere arrangement is not the least laborious, as it is perhaps the most responsible portion of the writer's task; and it is one for which Myers' special gifts admirably qualified him. The patience, the penetration, and the lucidity which he has brought to bear on it are above all praise, and his argument is marshalled and organised by a master's hand. Only the last deductions are left unfinished, and even here the argument is from the first so directed to a plain end that one can never doubt as to Myers's real opinion on any vital matter. Yet one may well hesitate to raise objections to which he may seem to have given too little weight; one may always fancy that so finished a dialectician had his answers in reserve, and might have found them a place in a completed work.

We have however a right to remember that, for all his real genius for scientific conceptions, Myers could not really approach this great subject with scientific detachment. He nowhere conceals his overwhelming desire that, in the highest interests of the human race, human personality should be proved to survive bodily death. The burning conviction that he holds in his hands this irrefutable proof fires his words with the enthusiasm of the prophet, while his desire to appeal to the reason of his contemporaries often imposes on him the stern restraint of the scientific treatise. The struggle between the two impulses is visible on every page of the book, and the skill with which they are fused is

characteristic and admirable. But if Myers did not attain to detachment, neither can any critic hope to do the same; the matter is too vital for every man. However surely the evidence be established, it is still so dark in interpretation that every one will read in it that which he most wants to read. Let me therefore honestly say at once that I want to find in it something which Myers did not want, and that I find it accordingly.

With this confession let me express at once the effect which Myers's work produces upon me. It greatly weakens my sense of personality, to such an extent that I am rather less than more willing to believe that my personality will survive death, at least in any sense which can make such a belief a dominant motive for this life's work. This result is clearly not what Myers would have wished; and yet it seems to me to be the natural outcome of all his evidence. I follow him in the great part at least of what he claims for the "subliminal Self" of the living; and then I have to ask, "can this subliminal self be called a part of my personality, in any sense in which such a belief will influence my life?" My subliminal self is something of which I am not conscious. It does not appear to be governed exclusively by the moral laws which I take as my guide, or by the physical laws which control my body, and, through my brain, my consciousness. I am barely aware, through the experience of others, of its existence, and know nothing of the laws by which it can affect what I call "me," or "I" can affect it. It appears, so far as I can learn anything about it, to move in another world, which approaches marvelously near to the Infinite or the Absolute or the World Spirit or whatever we like to call it; at all events in a region where what we call Personality becomes void of all meaning.

Personality as conceived by the ordinary man—and this is the view which, for the present at least, is of real moral significance—has both a positive and a negative aspect. On the one hand it is based fundamentally on the continuous stream of memory, which carries with it too our hopes and aspirations for the future. On the negative side it is equally defined by its limitations—primarily by its clear separation from the other similar streams of memory which we conceive as co-existent, and call the personalities of other men. Normally we think of our personality as limited by our physical frame and its capacity for sense impressions, and cut off from other personalities by a line as hard and fast as that which divides our bodies from the rest of material nature. It is difficult for a man to think of his personality apart from his body; and it is no doubt this difficulty which leads to the conception of what St. Paul calls the "spiritual body" of the Resurrection. This spiritual body would I suppose in modern phrase be called a surviving personality, a boundary, that is, which shall in a future life keep our earthly

memories together in a continuous stream with our discarnate memories, free from solution and absorption by any surrounding spiritual medium. And it is at any rate the existence of such a spiritual body that Myers sets himself to prove.

And yet it seems to me that the whole effect of his book is to shake and weaken every property of personality. He sets out with a striking chapter on Disintegrations of Personality, which at once shatters the natural, if somewhat crude idea of a man's self as a single stream of continuous memory in a single body. The stream is not continuous—it is subject to interruptions as capricious as they may be extensive. It is not single, for several streams, distinct and in some cases independent, may exist in the same body during its material life.

He then in subsequent chapters goes on to abolish the limitations which form the other elements in our conception of self. He conceives a secondary state in which the "spirit" can leave the body, and not only travel afar but actually modify spatial relations at a distance, so as to impress the sense-organs of other conscious persons. It may enter into their thoughts. It may even be independent of time, and become precognitive. It can in short take upon it some at least of the capacities which we usually associate with the "Absolute." And all of this—most of all the production of "collective hallucinations," for which the theory of space-modification seems to me to be a rather crude and unsatisfying hypothesis—to my mind reduces the notion of personality almost to vanishing point. Once more, it seems to take us into a region where personality becomes meaningless, because it loses its limitations, and, with its limitations, its unity.

And if this is the case with the incarnate spirit, how much more must we hesitate before we can ascribe to the discarnate the necessary boundaries which are required to constitute a personality. Of the discarnate spirit we only know for certain that if it does exist, it is without the most obvious bond which constituted it a separate unity. So far as there can be said to be any probabilities in such a matter, it would seem probable that the spirit emancipated from the body would extend these powers of the "secondary self" which appear to us as transcendental, and would enter into closer community with kindred spirits, till the bounds of personality grew vaguer or even vanished.

This is however a question of evidence, if evidence can be obtained. And the ultimate object of Myers' work is to bring forward such evidence and interpret it. Let me say first that the evidence which he brings is relevant and of the highest importance. It seems to me to prove much, but not all that he claims. And I say at once that it does seem to me to prove that something of us

does survive death. It seems to me to show that after the death of the body there remains a more or less coherent complex of memories which is accessible to the subliminal self of certain living persons. What I do not as yet see is that this complex has such coherence as can enable us to consider it a personality, or that it is bound up with such continuing vital processes as may justify us in holding that life in the spiritual world is continuous with life in this. The evidence seems to point rather to an alternative which at least is consistent with analogy, and demands to be fully considered—that as the physical body only gradually dissolves into its elements after death, so the spiritual retains for a time a certain coherence which is no proof of life. Under certain circumstances the physical body may be preserved in a way which enables us to tell, it may be centuries after, how the living man appeared externally in the world. It is possible that the same may be the case with the spiritual. There may be a process of dissolution, varying perhaps greatly under conditions of which we know nothing; and it may be possible for peculiarly gifted living spirits to behold the gradually disintegrating spirit, and bring us word, with more or less completeness, of what the spiritual man was during life.

Even if we go no farther than this, we have made a gigantic step. At all events the great abyss has been bridged, and with a foot on the other shore we have the possibilities of unknown realms to explore. Even if we hesitate to follow, we cannot blame a man like Myers who, with courage and hope, would lead us into the new world. But we must claim for ourselves the right to be heard if we carefully examine our first footing before we take a second step.

It is practically on the evidence of Mrs. Piper that the whole case is founded. Our reports of her trance-communications are so full that all other evidence sinks unto unimportance compared to them, and can only be regarded as confirmatory and of the second degree. Even the note-books of Stainton Moses, as Myers freely admits, full as they are, do not offer anything like the same strength of testimony. It is then to Mrs. Piper that we must turn, and more particularly to the sittings of her second period, when she was under the control known as "George Pelham." Let us see then what are the claims which Myers founds on these. They are so daring and startling that it is best to state them in his own words, which are clear and fearless enough.¹

"The claim then is that the automatist, in the first place, falls into a trance, during which his spirit partially 'quits his body';—enters at any rate into a state in which the spiritual world is more or less open to his perception; and in which also—and this is the novelty—it so far ceases to occupy the organism as to leave room for an invading spirit to use it in somewhat the same fashion as the owner is accustomed to use it.

"The brain being thus left temporarily and partially uncontrolled, a disembodied spirit sometimes, but not always, succeeds in occupying it; and occupies it with varying degrees of control. In some cases (Mrs. Piper) two or more spirits may simultaneously control different portions of the same organism."

Thus we have two distinct hypotheses—first, that the spirit of the sensitive has access, more or less, to the secrets of the invisible world; and secondly, that other spirits can take possession of the vacant organism, and reveal themselves through it, by speech or writing, or both together. What a complication results may be conceived. "We must continually bear in mind the impossibility of distinguishing the different elements that may enter into so complex a phenomenon. . . . The transparency which renders the one possession possible facilitates also the other. This may be one reason for the admixture seen in most trance-utterances—of elements which come from the sensitive's own mind with elements inspired from without. . . . Further, we cannot draw a clear line between the influence of the organism itself—as already moulded by its own indwelling spirit—and the continuing influence of that spirit, not altogether separated from the organism. . . . The result may be a kind of mixed telepathy between the sitter, the sensitive's spirit, and the extraneous spirit."²

Let us see if, for this appalling complication, we cannot substitute a theory more consistent with facts already observed, and simple enough to allow of some hope of interpretation. Let us then admit that Mrs. Piper passes into a secondary state in which her power of perception of the spiritual world is largely increased. Let us now suppose that in this spiritual world her secondary self finds memory groups surviving—possibly undergoing the process of dissolution, but still surviving and retaining a certain amount of coherence, and thus representing with more or less completeness the inner life of known persons who have passed away. Will not the known tendency of her secondary self to dramatic presentation lead to such communications as those which have been so fully and so carefully reported?

This question is in fact forced upon us by the principle of continuity which Myers rightly takes as his guide, and which is notably exemplified in the development of Mrs. Piper herself. Her first control, as we all know was "Dr. Phinuit." Myers still clings to the belief that Phinuit may possibly be regarded "as an intelligence extraneous to Mrs. Piper—as in fact a discarnate spirit."³ But he is conscious of the enormous difficulties in the way of such a belief, in view of Phinuit's untrue, and indeed absurd, statements respecting his life on earth; and he admits that "many may think it most probable that the Phinuit control was nothing

more than a secondary personality of Mrs. Piper." This is in fact the only theory which, at least in the present state of our knowledge, we have any right to hold.

In her third stage Mrs. Piper is controlled by "Imperator," "Rector," and others, who profess to have been when on earth certain illustrious, but not divine personages. They profess also to be identical with Stainton Moses' controls, who gave their real names to him; these were never published, but were known to Myers himself. It was therefore an obvious test that they should give through Mrs. Piper the names which they had given to Stainton Moses. This simple test they completely failed to fulfill.⁴ Thus in the third stage the evidence for external personality breaks down as it did in the first. If Imperator and his assistants are really discarnate personalities, they are lying spirits. But in the meantime we are bound to regard them as further *dramatis personae* of Mrs. Piper's fertile subliminal self.

There remains her second period, when she was under the control of "George Pelham," who claimed to be the spirit of a known person recently deceased. We notice the progressive advance from the vulgar "Phinuit," through the cultivated "G.P." to the exalted "Imperator"; and if we are to follow any principle of continuity, we must not assume for "G.P." any different origin from the other two. The evidence may possibly be overwhelming enough to force us to do so; but then we must abandon the principle of continuity.

Is then the evidence so overwhelming? Is it enough to force us to acknowledge that the controls of the second period are what they profess to be—the still living spirits of those who have recently passed away, and are making themselves known to their friends on earth? I have already indicated my own answer to this question. The evidence is very striking and very strong. It proves, I think, that memories of the dead survive, and are under special conditions accessible to us. But I do not see that it proves the survival of what we call the living spirit, the personality—a unit of consciousness, limited and self-contained, a centre of will and vital force, carrying on into another world the aspirations and the affections of this.

Those who took part in Mrs. Piper's earlier sittings came generally to the conclusion that she had by some subliminal faculty access to a store of memories belonging to the sitters and their friends, but not consciously present in their minds. As some one then put it, the effect was as though she had been able to rummage through a waste-paper basket full of their old letters, often torn and blurred, containing much that was unintelligible, but often affording an unmistakable, though forgotten, piece of fact. The main question for us in 1890 was whether these broken memories belonged only to the living, or whether there was not

some similar storehouse for the dead as well. The result of the later evidence seems to me to be that we must now accept the latter proposition as true. Further than this I do not think that it carries us.

A full discussion of the "G.P." communications would mean a review of Hodgson's and Hyslop's reports, rather than of *Human Personality*. But no reader of them can have failed to be struck by their fragmentary, obscure and generally muddled character. Professor Hyslop speaks frankly of the "discarnate spirit," as "exhibiting various degrees of clearness and confusion, merging now and then into delirium, automatism, or complete syncope."⁵ No better illustration of this can be found than the ingenious series of experiments by which he illustrates the nature of the communications by telegraphic messages between living persons.⁶ These clearly show, by the artificial restrictions required, how far the spirits fall below the intelligence of the normal rational man.

This undeniable and puzzling confusion is explained by Myers as due to the novel conditions under which a mind is using a brain which does not belong to it.⁷ Such a supposition hardly seems to meet the case. The most obvious puzzle is that the communicating spirits seem to have the greatest difficulty in getting at what should be the primary means of identification—their own names. This is hard to understand if the difficulty is one of means of communication only; it clearly points to some imperfect comprehension at the origin of the message. It becomes intelligible enough on the alternate hypothesis, that the messages are in fact being given at second hand. If we imagine ourselves as endeavouring to construct a dramatic presentation of a human being from what we can find in an old diary belonging to him, we see at once that his own name might be one of the hardest things to make out. And I conceive that the secondary personality of Mrs. Piper may be in somewhat the same position—having access to a cluster of earthly memories where the name of the owner is not explicitly presented, and must be slowly extricated, not by the agency of the owner himself, but by a process of inference—largely aided, no doubt, by the recipients of the communications. And further, the general mental attitude of the communicants seems distinctly to point to the cluster of memories as disintegrating—full of the gaps and vaguenesses which we should expect to find as the forerunners of ultimate dissolution.

That is the conclusion to which *Human Personality* has brought me. Myers himself would, I fear, have regarded it as a complete negation of his hopes, and a practical rejection of his life's work. To me it is not so. To me "personality" presents itself mainly as a limitation—as the barrier which inexorably cuts me off from those who are nearest and dearest to me, so that they can never "know

half the reasons why I smile or sigh." To a large part of the human race personality means something crippled by surroundings, or smirched with sin, or distorted by a hereditary taint, as it seems to us, beyond hope of cure. It is a hope and not a fear that the dissolution of the body may mean the dissolution of this spiritual crust as well; that one day the infinite which is within us all may have freer play, and mingle in unconstrained communion with other spiritual elements equally purged of earthly dross, through channels infinitely clearer and more translucent than the imperfect and unsatisfying organs of the mortal frame.

And this hope Myers, by the life's work which he has summed up in *Human Personality*, has enormously strengthened. He has shown that even in this life we have, through the subliminal self, a contact with the infinite which is more than a mere guess—that however imperfectly and sporadically, man has glimpses of a faculty transcending the powers of sense. And he has carried the link across the grave. This is after all the great step, beside which the rest sinks into insignificance. When once that is taken, anything else may follow. Myers further conclusions may prove in the end to be right; or man may through the ages work out a scheme of the spiritual world as far transcending Myers

as Myers transcends the Hottentot. But this will not one whit diminish the debt we owe to him.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, Vol. II, p. 190.
- ² *Ibid*, p. 249.
- ³ *Ibid*, p. 240.
- ⁴ *Proceedings*, Vol. XIII, pp. 408-9.
- ⁵ *Ibid*, Vol. XVI, p. 284.
- ⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 537-623.
- ⁷ *Human Personality*, Vol., II, p. 254.

Books Received

Anderson, Walt. *Open Secrets, A Western Guide to Tibetan Buddhism*. New York: The Viking Press, 1979. 230 pp. \$9.95.

Bolen, Jean Shinoda. *The Tao of Psychology*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979. 111 pp. \$6.95.

Christopher, Milbourne. *Search for the Soul*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1979. \$9.95.

Dass, Ram. *Miracle of Love*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979. 414 pp. \$9.95.

Dean, Barbara. *Wellspring*. Covelo, CA: Island Press, 1979. 208 pp. \$6.00.

Delaney, Gayle. *Living Your Dreams*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979. 232 pp. \$8.95.

Donnelly, Katherine Fair. *The Guidebook to ESP and Psychic Wonders*. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1978. 176 pp. \$9.95.

Hine, Virginia. *Last Letter to the Pebble People: "Aldie Soars."* Santa Cruz, CA: Unity Press, 1979. 159 pp. \$5.95.

Johnson, Charles W. Jr. *Fasting, Longevity and Immortality*. Haddam, CT: Survival, 1978. 213 pp. \$3.00.

Kastenbaum, Robert, Ed. *Between Life and Death*. New York: Springer Publishing Co., 1979. 184 pp. \$9.95.

Kavanaugh, James. *Walk Easy on the Earth*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979. \$8.95.

Kirshnamurti, J. *Meditations*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979. 63 pp. \$10.00.

Lischka, Alfred. *Eriebnisse jenseits der Schwelle*. Schwarzenburg, Switzerland: Ansata-Verlag, 1979. 234 pp. SFr.34.00.

Puharich, Andrija, Ed. *The Iceland Papers*. Amherst, WI: Essentia Research Associates, 1979. 191 pp. \$25.00.

Schwarz, Jack. *Human Energy Systems*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1980. 178 pp. \$6.95.

Starhawk. *The Spiral Dance*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979. 218 pp. \$6.95.

Speare, Grace. *Everything Talks to Me*. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1979. 321 pp. \$2.25.

Taylor, Gordon Rattray. *The Natural History of the Mind*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979. 370 pp. \$14.95.

Correspondence

I very much enjoyed Charles Moses' sympathetic account of the controversial Enfield case in your Winter 1979 number; but I am afraid he was mistaken in thinking that the kettle said to have "danced" in the kitchen there, was ever displayed here at the Society's headquarters. No such luck! If only it **had** been, it might have danced to the music of D.D. Home's accordion, which we **have** got!

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A small house on a farm which four male college students had rented as their "pad" for the school year just ended was said to be haunted. Several of us in the Psi Explorers Club of Lafayette, Indiana, went out to investigate. An engineering student showed us around.

The bathroom was quite large enough for several of us to move around in. In the center of this room I found a "cool" spot that slightly raised the hairs on my bare arms. There was no open window, no noticeable draft. "Oh, that!" the engineering student said, "That happens a lot around here; it isn't out of the ordinary."

On one occasion, he told us, one of the other men and his girl friend were sitting on the floor in one room smoking. She discovered that one of her legs was cool, the other not. They tested, with cigarette smoke, and found no air movement that would account for a difference in temperature.

In the bathroom, after a time, the cool spot had disappeared from the middle of the room, and we were not able to locate it elsewhere in the room. But while we talked there, one member leaned back against a table—and jumped forward. He had backed into the cool spot, apparently over the table.

One frequent "explanation" is that such a cool spot marks the location of an unseen visitor, a person "in spirit." This same experience, or one very similar, my wife and I have observed also in specific places, specific areas of a building, where it seemed to be related to the structure itself—especially to a dome or doorway.

I prefer to label this sensory experience "pseudo-coolness" because apparently thermometers show no difference in temperature. And, conceivably, there need not be an actual difference. Instead it could come about this way: Each of our senses has an "adequate" or appropriate kind of stimulus, but other kinds of stimulus sometimes produce a result. For example, with eyes closed, push on your eyeballs and you will perceive startling colors. A very small electric current applied to different parts of the tongue produces different sensations of taste. The deep whistle of a steam locomotive has tickled the hairs of my arms. Each of these is a response of one sense to a stimulus that is normal or "adequate" to some other sense.

Now, if there is an exotic form of energy that "spirit" presences bring with them (or that can be implanted in a building), it is conceivable that anyone sensitive to such energy would have the experience of coolness—or pseudo-coolness, because it is from a substitute stimulus that is not necessarily related to temperature.

Horror stories sometimes include a "horrid, deathly coldness" that flows, threatens, engulfs. I wonder if there are reports, without emotional amplification, of a more striking experience of this local "coolness"—or of verified differences in temperature.

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