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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to 4th edition of the *Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology*. In this publication, we have two research articles, three personal accounts with one accompanied by pictures of physical mediumship and ectoplasm, a book review and a short review on the 2014 Parapsychological Association convention. In “Numinous Experiences in the Closet” by Sean Hinton, we dive into the intricacies of extraordinary human experiences that are considered numinous, a term that will be defined and described. Next, JEEP review board member and clinician Renaud Evrard replies to Tremmel’s JEEP Vol. 2, No. 1 article, “Clarification of Terms and Concepts Defining Parapsychology and Related Disciplines: Comments on Mathijsen.”

The first personal account is on a few synchronous experiences and is presented by another JEEP review board member, Jennifer Lyke. This account is followed by Lester Lomax’s “Dream about the Green Van” which explores ESP, remote viewing and precognitive dreams. The third account by August Goforth titled, “Water Under the Rocks: A Firsthand Account of the Historical U.S. Visit of The Felix Experimental Group of Physical Mediumship, August–September, 2013” is a lengthy report but well worth the read. This submission covers basic background information on the Felix Experimental Group (FEG), multiple mediumship sittings and includes some amazing photographs by Shannon Taggart. Lastly, a book review on *The Healing Field* by Peter Mark Adams, as well as some thoughts on the 2014 Parapsychological Association convention, are presented by me.

Welcome, new readers and welcome back to those who are returning. I hope you enjoy this edition of JEEP and look forward to the next in summer 2015.

Best,

Erika A. Pratte
Editor

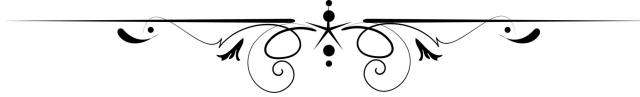
Submission Deadline for Spring 2015 is April 1, 2015

The *Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology* publishes research articles, personal accounts, artwork, music, creative writing, and letters to the editor on subjectively anomalous experiences. Please send all inquiries and submissions to

exceptionalpsychology@gmail.com

Numinous Experiences in the Closet

Sean Hinton



ABSTRACT

The subject of this paper is an artifact of a research project and exploration into the integration and meaningfulness, feelings of purpose, and behaviors of those who had numinous experiences.. This paper explores a portion of that research as to why extraordinary human experiences (EHEs) classified as numinous are potentially more common than suspected and why we have not received reliable facts as to the number of occurrences of these experiences. This article is related to the above-mentioned study which reveals a common theme of non-disclosure or very selective sharing. This theme or artifact is explored in this article because of its relevance to further research, clinical practice, and spiritual guidance.

The Numinous

The numinous is part of a consciousness shared potentially by all humans and is presented within consciousness as the presence of the divine *other*. Unity experience, direct knowing, divine presence, timelessness, infinite viewing, and all-knowing, have all been descriptions of such experiences we call *numinous* (James, 1903/2002; Stace, 1960). Usually, these experiences are of a short duration, and coming of their own volition rather than willed. These experiences are impactful and profound in and of themselves. Occurring naturally and spontaneously, the numinous is the result of intuition and tacit knowing, and our sensitivity to the ways of knowing. In an era in which fiction writers, movies and television exploit psychic, psi, and religious experiences as well as popular writings about these, such experiences are not accepted in the West as normal and are often vilified as pathological and symptomatic of psychosis (White, 1997).

Those that have these experiences in their life often keep them secret. Long standing taboos about disclosure have created a culture and collective unconsciousness around numinous experiences

that are based on collective fears and ideation. Davis, Lockwood, & Wright, (1991), found that slightly over 51 percent of their 256 study participants had been reluctant to report their peak experiences (a broader category of EHEs) for fear of having the experience devalued by others, seen as indicating imbalance, or losing the personal power of the experience if shared with others.

Explored herein are both the fear and the reward of disclosure.

The Significance of the Numinous in Individuation

As C. G. Jung (1963) stated, there is a healing that the numinous brings to psyche. It is only through numinous experiences of our feelings of divine presence that we are again reunited with the ground of our own spiritual being. Roberto Assagioli (1973) used the term *spiritual psychosynthesis* to describe the integration of our subpersonalities with the spiritual and transpersonal energies of what Assagioli named the *superconsciousness*. This “superconsciousness is a transpersonal and transcendent fountain of spiritual energy that can be contacted through a wide variety of techniques and practices such as meditation, active imagination and music” (Battista, 1996, p. 53).

The psychologies of Maslow (1994) and Assagioli (1973) point towards the greater sense of being that can arise in human potential and spiritual integration as apexes of the human experience and as creating a greater sense of wholeness. Using Maslow's (1971) language of individuation and the self-transcendence of self-actualized individuals, creativity is both a metamotivation value and a part of Being-cognition exhibited by those Maslow (1971) termed *self-actualized people*. Roberto Assagioli's (1973) psychosynthesis model expresses that a greater spiritual identification in the psyche is part of the integration of life experience into a greater sense of wholeness. Jaffe indicates that the experience of the numinous is necessary for individuation to occur, in that its meaning, "flows from the numinosity of the self [and] has to be understood as the 'divine' in man" (1971, p. 79). It is for these reasons that the numinous is representative of a desire for wholeness and is both a state of being and a process of self-actualization.

Jung is quoted by Storr et. al. (1983) as describing this process and goal as follows; "The goal towards which individuation is tending is 'wholeness' or 'integration,' a condition in which all the different elements of the conscious and unconscious are welded together" (p. 229). Critical to this process is disclosure. Prior research shows EHE disclosures are accompanied by "themes of well-being, meaning, openness, spirituality, need satisfaction, and transformative change" (Palmer & Braud, 2002, p. 29). Palmer and Braud found that, "Mystical/unitive [numinous] experiences were reported by a majority of participants as having the most profound impacts on their lives, and as being the most beneficial" p.41 .

Basic Research Design

Using mixed methods of quantitative correlations of measurements and qualitative inquiry by narrative analysis, my research explored the numinous and primary research questions. The broader

research questions explored were: (a) what are the ways in which people who have had numinous experiences perceive these experiences as either meaningful or not meaningful in their lives, (b) what are some contextual elements needed for the numinous experience to become a catalyst of meaning and/or transformation, and (c) what processes benefit or enhance the assimilation and integration of the numinous experience.

This exploration was achieved by reading of transcripts and listening to recorded narratives of participants who had experiences of a type classified as numinous based on the work of Jung (1960) and Otto (1923/1950). Thematic characteristics of individuation, particularly meaningfulness, were explored as central to the interpretation of these experiences. Individuation was defined as a psychological process that moves people towards wholeness, meaning, and purpose (Jung, 1960/1960; Assagioli, 1973).

The research followed a simple exploratory design that consisted of the following ordered procedures:

- ☞ *Informed Consent*: A description of the research and the potential affect, both positive and negative, for participants
- ☞ *Hood Mysticism Scale*: A standardized scale used to validate a match to the research criteria of a numinous experience by participants.
- ☞ *Hinton PPMI*: PPMI is a validated instrument developed to measure both positive beliefs about one's meaning and also one's purpose generally felt in their life.
- ☞ *Demographic Questionnaire*
- ☞ *Instructions for Writing a Personal Narrative of the experience*.

☞ *Instruction for the creation of an art piece expressive of the experience*

☞ *Interview Follow-Up Questions:* Standard questions to be included in all participant semistructured interviews following the completion of their personal narrative and the completion of all instruments and primary questionnaires to the above-listed research

☞ *Post-Research Survey:* An emailed questionnaire asking for information reflecting on the process of being a participant and basic importance assigned to the experience in relation to the participants' life prior and post experience.

1. A demographic questionnaire
2. The Hood M-Scale
3. The Hinton PPMI

Participants were selected based on their self-identified statement that they had experienced a numinous experience and as verified by scores on the Hood Mysticism Scale. The study utilized the following inclusion criteria for participation: (a) participant must be at least 18 years old; (b) Participant must be in good health with no recent major illnesses; (c) Participant must have a self-reported stable psychological history and was not taking medications for psychological reasons.

Participants included an even gender balance: 10 women and 8 men. Average age was 48 years old, ranging from 25 to 68. Of this group, 22 percent of the participants' ($n = 4$) country of origin was outside the United States; 28 percent identified themselves as being non-White; and 72 percent indicated they were White or identified as White; 1 identified themselves as Asian; 1 identified themselves as Mid-Eastern; and 3 identified themselves as being Racially Mixed. Initial quantitative data was collected using three instruments:

Additionally, the self-reporting survey was added post-interview as a quantitative measure of the research study's effect on participant's sense of integration. The Hood M-Scale measures mystical experience has been in use since 1975. It consists of 32 questions in 8 categories. The Hood M-Scale was selected because it is easy to complete, it has been standardized initially with 300 participants, and it has been used cross-culturally. A test of the internal reliability was completed on the PPMI using a matrix of internal correlations and computing a Cronbach's alpha coefficient, commonly used as a measure of the internal consistency or reliability of a psychometric test. At .802, the PPMI is within $.9 > \alpha \geq .8$, a range considered to be very good. The data indicate a level of correlation between the Hood M-Scale and full PPMI and the PPMI Meaning sub scores as being high ($> .50$); subsections of the PPMI related to Meaning showed a high degree of correlation to the Hood M-Scale with a low probability of chance occurrence $p < .001$. The goal of statistical evaluation using such instruments is "to decide whether the results we obtain are sufficiently compelling" (Kazdin, 2003, p. 436) to reject the null hypothesis of no correlation. The data demonstrates a strong correlation between the Hood M-Scale and full PPMI and an even stronger correlation between the section relevant to Meaning in the PPMI, sufficient to reject the null hypothesis of no correlation. It can be concluded that these experiences were demonstrated to correlate with higher feelings of personal meaning.

Qualitative data were collected in three formats:

1. An expressive art piece by each participant, representative of the participants' emotive interpreta-

tion and felt sense of their experience;

2. A reflexive personal narrative in which the participant was asked to recapitulate and write down his or her experience in present tense;
3. A semistructured interview with the participant, related to the process of assimilation, integration, and meaning as they felt the experience unfolding within themselves, their projection of others' interpretation of their experience, and if and how the experience had changed them

Results

This article highlights the portion of the overall findings of the semi-structured interviews, specifically related to the fact that there is a preponderance of behaviors noted that such experiences are secreted or closeted by those that experience them. Noticing this, a secondary research question was informally put into the overall study.

Secondary Research Question

The focus of this article is the secondary research question, "Why are these experiences not shared more openly?" To explore this phenomenon, each participant was asked, *What meaning if any, would do you believe other people might find in this experience?* This question was designed to identify projections that the participants internally held in regards to openly disclosing their experience to others. This secondary question was the result of an interview with Jan, one of the participants during preliminary testing of the protocol to be used.

While conducting the preliminary research on the extraordinary experience of encounters with

the divine that can be labeled *numinous*, some interesting facts emerged. From prior research such as Palmer and Braud (2002) and anecdotal accounts I had assumed that such experiences would hold a high degree of meaning but I wanted to find how such meaning becomes part of the operational experience and daily life of those that have had such experiences.

Although numinous and religious experiences are not the same, they are often intertwined. Research by William James (2002) vouched for the numinous being highly charged and profoundly significant. It therefore seemed to me a forgone fact that such experiences are potentially life changing or transformative experiences. It also seemed that such experiences would be rather rare in the population based on my general day to day knowledge. Both of these assumptions proved to be not wholly true. I found that exceptional experiences (EEs) of this nature are not so rare much to my relief when I was recruiting subjects for the research. Far from being the difficult task I anticipated, I found that I could expand the number of participants in my research which would render a higher degree of statistical validity.

On the surface, most research participants seemed to be pursuing normal careers and not teaching to the masses or writing about their experiences in exposé articles for popular magazines. In fact, participants seemed to closet their experiences from others. Typical of this behavior was shown in the interview I conducted with my first participant, Jan (not her real name). All names referred to in this paper are not the true names of the participants. They are pseudo-names the participants selected for themselves during my research.

Jan's Interview

Below are partial excerpts of an interview with Jan. The interview was conducted on July 4, 2010, with Jan, a 53 year old bilingual elementary school teacher in Northern California. Her experi-

ence occurred over 30 years prior to our interview while having sex with her boyfriend at the time. Jan's interview illuminates the issue of closeting EEs for many decades. The interview also indicates that the experience continues to have meaning in her life.

JAN: It was like everything in the entire universe was just one and it was like you had this huge overview you could see everything all at the same time. It was like all of a sudden you understood when people were talking about God or talking about the whole world becoming one and I started crying tears of joy."

Interviewer: What meaning did you take away from this experience?

JAN: Well, I think that the thing that I have taken away from that is that when they talk about the universe and everybody and everything in it being interconnected, I know what they mean, now. Whereas before you can read philosophy or study religion or anything like that, they can say that we are all connected you know all of nature is connected, all of humanity is connected; we all have a common bond. But that is when, because of that experience I really understood that.

Interviewer: What meaning would other people find in this experience?

JAN: I don't know that other people would understand it because it's not something that is very easy to communicate. Or to convince people or to even share or describe, the feeling is very interesting, difficult to do. So, I don't know that people would be able to assign a meaning to it. Unless they themselves have had similar experiences and then I think that they would intuitively understand umm the feeling that I had or the experience that I had. **This is actually the first time that I have ever told anybody about it.** [Bold added by author]

Interviewer: So you really never talked about this experience. Is there any particular reason that you felt you didn't want to talk about it?

JAN: It was never like you know, I'm not going to talk about that, I don't know why maybe because it's something that is very personal I really don't know way I've never talked about it. It's not like you say "hey I had a religious experience one time" or something like that.

JAN: I have never brought it up to anybody, until you asked me to do this interview. (Hinton, 2010, p. 3-6)

As stated above, the experience happened over thirty years prior to the interview. During this time Jan had been married, divorced, had a few lovers and a child who is now grown. Yet she had never spoken of this to anyone. This fact struck me in a profound way. Two questions came from this interview that were included in the research that later evolved. The first was, did the experience have meaning in the participant's life subsequently as expressed in changes to behavior or world view, and secondly and important to this article, what did the participants feel others would think about their experience.

The second question was directly incorporated to gain insight into the issue of closeting these profound experiences. The first related to the meaningfulness of the experience in effecting life changes, the original query of the research. It is the issue of closeting that is the focus of this article and by the participants revealing expressions of closeting from over twenty related interviews, such behavior seemed dominant. The feelings of the participants were categorized into themes pulled from the interview transcripts as the following chart below portrays. Their projection of feelings and thoughts of others relating to closeting were put into seven operational themes.

Other People's Thoughts	(OPT)
1. Can only tell a select few if receptive; changes how it is heard	8
2. Others will not believe, be uncomfortable or ignore (I won't be heard)	8
3. Others cannot understand or will project their own belief into my experience	8
4. Have told no one or very few other than researcher	4
5. Others will ridicule my experience	3
6. Sharing will lose meaning or sacredness	2
7. Experience too personal to share	1

Chart 1: response to other people and sharing of experience (Hinton, 2012)

Unique individual expressions of a theme as categorized were multifaceted and conveyed context and texture that cannot be expressed or conveyed in simple categorical phrases. Yet it is clear that participants universally felt uncomfortable about sharing their powerful experiences with others. The findings therefore are in agreement with other researchers. What is important to note is that these are ideation projected by the experiencers about other people's thoughts.

The fact that these experiences are not frequent and are confounded by fears of being perceived by others often as weird, anomalistic experiences or worse, pathological, often leads to closeting. It was shown in the semi-structured interviews that participants who had such experiences projected their own fears of ridicule into the thoughts of others, which may or may not have been justified. The quotes from the participants' interviews (below) portrayed these fears and cautious attitudes towards disclosing their experiences to others. Using the participant's quotes reveals the context and texture of their feelings:

Any time I image or shared this experience with others I get really tense and uncomfortable like, trying to put words around it, and I get other people's version or interpretation. What they're relating to also does

not feel good, like it takes the experience away from me. So I feel like it is so personal and so internal. I think it's the longing that I'm reacting to and when I share this with others I feel the longing in me is exposed and I feel very vulnerable and I get somewhat defensive. - Seeing Starz

I would expect them to overlay their belief system onto it so . . . I guess it really depends on the receptivity of the listener. I think in some way it would be less meaningful . . . because the words are so limited in their ability to express it and I found it would just frighten people and turn them off so I just learned to shut up about it. - Lee

I haven't really not, like, intentionally, because I was thinking, "oh, no one will understand," but it was so like, I enjoy sharing it now . . . but it was like I was on my own. On my little 2, 3-day kind of excursion. And, I don't know, it almost got tucked away in this different place. And I didn't think to share it in an odd way. - Sabrina Star

[Others] probably would not understand. And some of my friends would try to intellectualize it and try to place it in, you know, in different boxes in their mind. So because I've had that experience in trying to convey what it is, and what has happened, I just decided that there is no need for me to really share it . . . unless I understand that the person with whom I am sharing is willing to suspend judgment - Sophie

I'm sure a lot of people would go kind of, "huh you know, I don't get it," or they would think I was a kook. - Lazy. (Hinton, 2012, p. 135-136)

Each person revealed feelings which had bits of isolation and fear running through their ideation of sharing their experience. Fear of having everything they say or do becoming suspect because they have been candid about their experience is a real consideration for the experiencer. The categories in Chart 1 represent a good summation of the types of struggles these individuals felt around their experiences and much of their anxieties. After a hundreds of years of psychological pathologizing within a culture of theological and philosophical negation of these experiences, most have feelings of shame surrounding their experiences.

Most people experience a collective unconsciousness which is full of fear about revealing unknown states of awareness, yet these fears, lack of assimilation, and closure of experience can change for each individual with safe disclosure. Much of the projected fear is abated by the light of disclosure and consciously sharing their experience. Disclosure of exceptional experiences correlated significantly and positively with existential meaning and psychological well-being, and correlated significantly and negatively with the presence of stress-related physical and psychological complaints in prior research (Palmer & Braud, 2002).

The trustworthy creation, for the participants, of a safe space and process which was non-judgmental, caring, and had an openness to explore safely, was built into the protocol of the research and was shown to benefit many of the disclosers. The research was not designed to test intervention or techniques for intervention, but to gather reports from the participants that indicate their relationship to the EE and assimilation of their experience. Using similar protocols, the research process might prove useful as a process for assimilation of EE in the fields of psychotherapy or spiritual guidance. When asked if the research process had benefited her, Lazy concluded her interview with the following comments, referring to the research process;

It has [the process]. I want to thank you for that. I feel like I want to thank you for giving me that chance, and I'm glad to revisit it. 'Cause I don't usually revisit that whole thing, but revisiting it gives me a little bit of a boost kind of . . . I have never really gone back and talked about it with anybody. So you're the number one. (Hinton, 2012 p. 141)

Lazy had this experience over 25 years ago, so it was significant to me that she had the opportunity to disclose and explore this experience fully for the first time in my presence. Lazy and others in their interviews often expressed benefits from disclosure. Below is how they expressed this in their own words:

You know, I feel trusted, that my sharing with you is only for good; so yeah. And also I want to say that you know it's interesting because of the fact that it was beneficial. - Lazy

In writing this piece for you or for this research project I should say I just got in touch with how locked away it is; mostly because I just never really knew what to do with it. - Thunder Runner

Well. I really appreciate both the opportunity to share and the space to . . . And it was really valuable to me. And . . . it seems this could be a real contribution in terms of... of what I got out of it and... there really isn't a lot of assimilation for me in a very conscious way anyway. It's just I think just researching it and writing about these experiences kind of brings more of that connection which really seems valuable. - Sabina Star

My sense is writing about it and especially today talking about it in this way has helped me integrate it because I usually don't talk about it, to anybody. - Seeing Starz (Hinton, 2012, pp. 141-142)

Disclosure, to the people I interviewed, was like placing a period at the end of a sentence; the recapitulation of the experience made it valid, real and meaningful. Mostly, there was a feeling of completeness. Each one felt they could now own their own experience in a way that gave them dignity without fear that their experience made them oddly different. The disclosure punctuated a meaningful event and brought it to a point of meaning and gratitude for having the experience. This does not mean that those individuals who have these experiences will go about telling it to all they meet, for that is obviously not needed; it means that they have a feeling of their isolation and fear being abated, making assimilation of their own experience possible.

Important to this article is the foundational work on exceptional human experiences (EHEs) done by Rhea White (1997) in relation to meaning. Her work, as well as this researcher's inquiry, indicates that disassociation from these extraordinary experiences and lack of personal integration of such experiences may occur. Such dissociative acts break the linkage of such events to meaning and cause a gap in experience or, as viewed by Hillman (1975), an incompleteness of Soul. Unlike trauma, the dissociative behaviors are not due to the pain or fear associated with the event, but the projected fears of exclusion from the collective or community. It is for this reason that disclosure is both therapeutic and assuring. This is the important fact of this investigation and deserves further research. The totality of experiences, experienced by the individual can be integrated as an expression of the fullness of their being, when expressed within a sympathetic environment.

It is my hope that we as psychologists and even more, as humans, will offer a space to share these experiences. I also wish that as a collective, we come to be more open to the diversity and wealth of our collective psychological experiences and less fearful and pathologizing of these experiences.

Some primary notes on creating space: confidentiality and respect for other's experience is the most important starting point. Confidentiality is simple and direct for any professional. Respect for the experience of others is vital to opening space, as well. The steps of taking time to write and follow the journey in a recapitulation is an exercise in conscious involvement with an expressive narrative and changes the events pieces into meaningful elements of a narrative. The art piece as an expressive, nonverbal recapitulation, opens the participant to the own experiencing.

Conclusions relating to the closeting of these experiences are that all of the types of reasons for closeting are valid from the individual's perspective and also limiting to the individual's assimilation of their experience. As noted above, it is not the nature of the experience that causes repression but the fear of other's opinions and judgments. Such defensive strategies cannot serve the greater needs of the psyche for individuation and spiritual growth, since it leaves a gap between one's experiences and what they mean to his life. Also, it has been demonstrated that disclosure in a sound manner greatly benefits those having numinous experiences as shown in the work of Palmer and Braud(2002).

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Biography

Sean Hinton, Ph.D. works in California as a consultant to business leaders. He pursues his interest as an author, international lecturer, researcher, and educator. He studied depth psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute, and received a Ph.D. in transpersonal psychology from the Sofia University for research in the area of numinous experiences and personal transformation.

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Are Exceptional Experiences Just Spontaneous Cases? A Reply Tremmel (2014)

Renaud Evrard



ABSTRACT

When is a telepathic impression becoming parapsychological? Psychopathological? Is an out-of-body experience a paranormal phenomenon or, even, a paranormal experience? This article aims to review the nomenclature around the emerging field of the psychology of exceptional experiences (ExE). Tremmel (2014) has already done a brilliant job of clearing the way, but I think he reintroduces as much confusion as he has removed. I therefore reply to his article with a proposal based on the notion of “spontaneous cases,” which makes a link between experimental parapsychology and ExE, even he didn’t use it.

Spontaneous Cases in Parapsychology

The Parapsychological Association’s glossary defined “spontaneous case” as “A discrete incident of ostensible spontaneous *psi*.” *Psi* is the umbrella term on which parapsychologists project possible unknown processes that can account for the anomalies they observe. Thus defined, it would be the base material susceptible to a parapsychological interpretation. Several authors stressed the importance of the study of these spontaneous cases (i.e., Stokes, 1997; Alvarado, 2002). Irwin and Watt gave many arguments for such a study:

Spontaneous cases may be of use to parapsychologists in several ways. First, it must be said that these “real life” experiences are what we are endeavoring to explain. It is all very well to take ESP into the laboratory for controlled investigation and precise statistical evaluation, but once this is done our hope surely is that we will be in a position to explain how and why people have these parapsychological experiences in the course of everyday life. Collections of spontaneous cases at least should serve to remind experimental parapsychologists of the ultimate goal

of their research.

A second function of case material is to indicate the different ways in which ESP (if there is such a thing) may be expressed. For example, ESP experiences in everyday life seem to relate to past, present, and future events, and may take the form of an intuition, a hallucination, or a mental image (e.g., dream). The researcher should be alert to these ecological vehicles of expression and consider the extent to which specific laboratory findings may be generalized to the various forms.

Perhaps a primary role of spontaneous cases is to suggest hypotheses for experimental investigation. (Irwin & Watt, 2007, p. 39)

These authors made explicit links between experimental parapsychology and the experiences people sometimes interpret as relevant to parapsychology; such an association seems obvious. Parapsychology would be the scholarly end of a continuum beginning with the “real life” experiences of every man, and its ultimate goal is to close the loop by explaining to every man what his weirdest experiences are. This connection is increasingly claimed as exemplified by the title of Jane Henry’s book, *Parapsy-*

chology: *Research on Exceptional Experiences* (2005), or the first lines of Irwin & Watt's *Introduction to Parapsychology 5th Edition*:

Parapsychology is the scientific study of experiences which, if they are as they seem to be, are in principle outside the realm of human capabilities as presently conceived by conventional scientists. Thus parapsychological phenomena ostensibly indicate the operation of factors currently unknown to or unrecognized by orthodox science, popularly referred to as *paranormal* factors.” (Irwin & Watt, 2007, p. 1)

These first sentences are quite destabilizing, because they show a discipline riding between natural sciences (*phenomena*) and humanities (*experiences*), where we do not know which part comes from individual witnesses and which part from authenticated events, and if “paranormal factors” always apply to these non-conventional experiences. However, it is most disturbing to find a similar approach and the same scope on strange experiences in recent introductions to *anomalous psychology* (Holt et al., 2012; French & Stone, 2014). How do we bring order to this chaos?

Parapsychology and Anomalistic Psychology

Historically, parapsychology was merged with anomalistic psychology (Evrard, 2013b). The debate between Mathijsen (2009, 2013) and Abrasart (2013) is about the possibility of an epistemic independence of anomalistic psychology. I already wrote that I acknowledge the legitimacy of this epistemic independence but that I found it undesirable, as parapsychology (misrepresented, according to Tremmel, 2014, p. 34, as an “experimental science of psi phenomena”) is complementary and compatible with an “inclusive anomalistic psychology” (Evrard, 2013b).

To help clarify this debate, I suggest to dis-

entangle *parapsychology* and *anomalous psychology*, as it seems to me that there is an inappropriate epistemological bonding that I call the “experience-phenomenon continuum.” The distinction between a *paranormal event* and a *paranormal experience* is well made in the *Varieties of Anomalous Experiences* (Cardeña et al., 2014). But it's the discipline of parapsychology as a whole which draws much of its legitimacy and its popularity from its claim to explain *paranormal experiences* by parapsychological (psi) phenomena or by non-parapsychological (non-psi) phenomena. Since the beginning of the SPR, with *Phantasms of the Living* and the *Census of Hallucinations*, this experience-phenomenon continuum was established through surveys that show the high prevalence of apparently *paranormal experiences* in the general population – an undeniable and never questioned issue for other scientists. But this genuine data has been systematically associated with the effects produced in parapsychological laboratory, while the gap between the two may, in fact, be immense.

For example, if we take lucid dreams, out-of-body experiences, or near-death experiences, we learn very little through parapsychology as there is a lack of empirical research on the objective correlates of these experiences. Therefore, these experiences are better explored and explained by psychological and neuroscientific studies (i.e., Murray, 2009; Cardeña et al., 2014). Parapsychological hypotheses as the General Extra-Sensory Perception (GESP) make the empirical testing of these experiences very complicated *as they are lived*. For instance, any “astral travel” with objective correlates may be reduced to clairvoyance or even autoprémonition, which does not support the subjective phenomenology of the experience. The same prevails for major experiences as oceanic feeling or synchronicities, on which experimental parapsychology has not much to say (Storm, 2008).

There are many examples along these lines of this discontinuity between personal experiences and parapsychological knowledge on psi phenome-

na. Rhea White embodies herself as an example as she became an excellent parapsychologist initially to understand her NDE, before turning to a phenomenological approach of ExE to really learn something about what she had experienced (see Evrard, 2013a). Like her, lots of people come to parapsychology with the hope to decode their experiences. Unless they adhere to a worldview more or less derived from parapsychology (e.g., an anti-materialist perspective), there is unfortunately nothing for them.

Some researchers pointed to this gap between spontaneous experiences and controlled phenomena, marking this discontinuity as a systemic border between endo- and exo-perspectives (Lucadou, 1994). They may be the same type of phenomena, but operating under very different processes due to variations in the observation conditions. In the endo-perspective, “psi” effects appeared as strong signal with a significant meaning; in the exo-perspective, the same effects are perceived as “absurd” pseudo-signals (which have no impact on the observer). For Lucadou (1994, 2001), these two perspectives are irreconcilable and determine the deviation between the personal evidence for psi and its difficult scientific demonstration.

But a lot of parapsychologists act as if the conditions of observation were not an epistemological obstacle, only a technical issue. By reproducing “in vivo” conditions into an arranged “in vitro” setting, they attempt to transpose paranormal experiences into psi phenomena without any distortion (see for instance Sheldrake’s researches, 2013; Holt’s “real life” remote viewing experiment, 2007; etc.). But this transposition remains limited: *in vitro* phenomena don’t have the same subjective value; and they are subjected to elusiveness (Storm, 2008; Lucadou, 2001).

We may also discuss the failures of finding a psychological profile of people prone to ExE and able to perform reliably in the laboratory; or some results which go against the direction of spontane-

ous cases, as dyadic correlations between the brain of people who don’t know each other and have no interaction (Wackermann et al., 2003). But my goal here is only to question the implicit leitmotiv according to which so-called “parapsychological experiences” have something to do with parapsychology *stricto sensu*.

In this respect, Tremmel (2014, p. 31-32) quoted Chris French who claimed that anomalistic psychology’s aims would still be valid even if the existence of paranormal forces were to be established beyond doubt, because most paranormal experiences can be plausibly explained in non-paranormal terms. But Tremmel seems to disagree with what he saw as a reductionist (albeit legitimate) enterprise that doesn’t take into account “genuine psychic experiences.”

Finding the Right Term

Tremmel discussed various terms to conduct an effective division of territories and disciplines:

The terms (*para*-)psychic, *parapsychological*, *paranormal*, and *psi* differ in their connotations. The term *anomalous* is not synonymous with these terms as it means *deviating from what is standard, common, normal, usual, or expected*. The term *anomalous experiences*, as used by Abrassart, relates to the discipline of anomalistic psychology, which, however, is exclusively concerned with subjectively anomalous experiences instead of the full range of anomalous experiences. (Tremmel, 2014, p. 21; his italics)

Tremmel’s distinctions are not so clear. As he defined it, *anomalous experience* really seems to be a synonym of the other para/psi terms, because it refers to an objective law or norm that is subverted, transgressed or reversed by a phenomenon (event or experience). I don’t understand why he offered to confiscate this term for the discipline of

anomalistic psychology only, since these *anomalous experiences* can be studied by every discipline which deals with human experiences, even with a non-reductionist approach.

A more relevant distinction seems to be the one carried by the term ExE. Tremmel spotted a difference but is very noncommittal and critical of it:

The term *exceptional experiences*, as used by Evrard, is neither synonymous with *psychic experiences*, *paranormal experiences*, and so forth, nor ideologically neutral as it connotes subjectivity and specialness. The concept underlying it neither applies to all phenomenological approaches in parapsychology nor should be the only basis for approaches in clinical parapsychology. (Tremmel, 2014, p. 21; his italics)

Indeed, ExE is not a synonymous of previous terms but the reason for that is that it follows another strategy of nomenclature. ExE refers to a subjective rule, a worldview, a personal paradigm of what reality is. On the basis of Metzinger's concepts, Fach (2011) called it the "Reality Model," split into a "Self Model" and a "World Model." Then he simply defined "exceptional experiences" as "Anomalies in the Reality Model" for one individual. As everybody has his own Reality Model, despite some cultural and familial influences, the main difference between this concept and the others is that it is *self-relative*. Thus, it has the huge advantage of being able to dispense with some implicit normative premises: there is no such thing as a "Paranormal Field" that exists from all eternity, because there is no "Normal Field" that is valid for all. The paranormal is everyone's business. Each culture defines what is ordinary and what is not, and each individual within that culture tinkers his own sorting system.

I didn't argue that *exceptional experiences* should be the only basis for approaches in clinical parapsychology, but it has some advantage over

others because it stands out socio-anthropological predicates, it does not relate these experiences to a body of knowledge or pseudo-knowledge, and, therefore, it does not imply a bias on the ontological nature of these experiences. Assert that an impression of telepathy is a parapsychological, transpersonal or schizophrenic experience already implies to orient the field of interpretation, while the notion of exceptional experiences preserves their plurality of potential fates.

Let's make a comparison. No one would say that *dreams* are "psychoanalytic experiences" *per se*; however, psychoanalysts traditionally employ the dream as a material of choice for their clinical approach, a "royal road to the unconscious." Other therapists and researchers apprehend dreams differently, so the onirism cannot be isolated in a single doctrine or practice.

The "specialness" connotation of the ExE term is also an advantage as people can easily endorse it, while many terms tend in contrast to stigmatize these experiences but, fundamentally, the notion of "exception" refers to a logical approach of the dialectic between rules and anomalies (I hope to expand on that in a further article). Besides, in French, *anomalous* ("anomal") is not a common adjective as it is always confounded with *abnormal* ("anormal"), so it can't have its neutral connotation. But *exceptional* has to be taken as the closest (French) term to express something *anomalous*.

This "relativist" definition of ExE results in the issue of *cognitive relativism* (what Tremmel interprets as a lack of ideological neutrality, 2014, p. 33): if someone found trivial to live with ghosts, can we still call this an exceptional experience? This question shows the gap with other concepts which always consider that "ghosts" (or anything supposedly "paranormal") is a special identifiable belief, associated with other beliefs, attitudes, practices, personality traits, socio-demographics parameters, etc. There is a lot of legitimate general knowledge which is applied on every people who

have haunting experiences. But if you are interested on how one person (or a group of people) deals with ghosts, you have to take some distance with this general knowledge and be open to novelty and singularity. For a clinician, such a practice is obvious: he or she uses general knowledge of psychology and psychopathology, but he or she puts it in dialogue with the unique journey and personality of each of his or her patients. Then, if someone doesn't have any problem with the ghost in his or her house, the "dynamics" of the "anomalies in the Reality Model" are not there and he or she may have no reason to seek help because of that. Such a *methodological relativism* may also be fruitful for other approaches of ExE (anthropological, phenomenological, etc.).

Defined as such, ExE are *overtly* relativist, but we know where are the elements we need to understand the situation. The other concepts are *implicitly* relativist, as they refer to norms, evolving scientific laws, prejudices, cultural and social influences, etc. Such benchmarks are hardly objective. Even the most neutral term, "psi", remains very connoted and depends, in experimental reports, of a threshold of statistical significance, which is the matter of a (contested and evolving) social consensus. It becomes too difficult to know when an experience is parapsychological or psychopathological, transpersonal or Christian... and that "discernment of spirits" is the issue of heated debate for centuries (see Evrard, in press).

Epistemology and Ontology in the Clinical Practice with ExE

Tremmel further develops his nomenclature: "In other words, anomalistic psychology's topics are paranormal beliefs (...) and so-called exceptional experiences (a term that connotes subjectivity [...]), although from a solely reductionistic perspective." (Tremmel, 2014, p. 32) As explained above, the term ExE is not reductionist *per se*. It only says that the experiences are analyzed

from the point of view of the experiencer, not on the basis of psychology or other scientific (temporary) laws or norms. In this section, I want to differentiate between anomalistic psychology and clinical psychology of exceptional experiences, as they have different agendas.

Anomalistic psychology deals with experiences and beliefs which are outside "normal" human lives, for various reasons; it studies them for a scientific purpose and offers models of understanding, but, in the clinical setting, we can't just apply anomalistic psychology since our goal is to help someone to cope with what he or she is living, not to be right, to impose the best available scientific theory.

For example, I remember one patient who was increasingly disturbed when I offered to interpret his nocturnal experiences through the sleep paralysis model. Even if this model fits well in his case, he was more comfortable to integrate his experiences within a spiritualist model (communication with entities that help him resolve some problems in his life). Some researchers have shown that impersonal appraisals of anomalous experiences are associated with more anxiety than personal appraisals (Brett et al., 2007). The aim of the clinician then differs from the one of the scientist as he or she has to tolerate exotic appraisals if they truly help the patient (see for example, the "voice hearing movement": Evrard, 2014b).

Tremmel misunderstood the complex position of the clinician in front of objective correlates of exceptional experiences. For example, psychoanalyst Georges Devereux (1953) developed a position of undecidability that enables one to face these objective correlates without ceasing to be a clinician with a clinical aim. A portion of the cases of exceptional experiences mixed "coincidences" with other anomalies of the Reality Model (Fach et al. 2013). But even these coincidences are subject to various appraisals. Tremmel stated (2014, p. 35) that the clinical approach of ExE neglects the cases of actual psychic experiences, which may need a

distinctive method of treatment. But how a clinician may be sure to face genuine phenomena when he or she does not try to control them? The clinical setting can't suddenly become a laboratory of parapsychology with purified phenomena: the general picture is a mixture of objective and subjective elements, which requires to fall neither in denial nor in fascination. The clinician can't exchange his clinician cap with its researcher cap during the therapy.

And why should these objective correlates of ExE require a change of the treatment? If the clinical approach is already neutral, the aim of its action remains the integration of the experience in the (current or revised) Reality Model of the individual. The belief that "paranormal experiences" call for "paranormal therapies" has long been an obstacle to the development of a clinical practice with ExE that don't fall into the ideological excesses of sub-pathologizing or over-pathologizing these experiences (Evrard, 2012).

Tremmel (2014, p. 35) used an example which may help to understand the current difference between our perspectives:

Imagine a person diagnosed with schizophrenia is hearing voices and believes them to be hallucinations related to his disorder. He tells his therapist what he is hearing in detail. His therapist recognizes that what his patient is reporting corresponds exactly and repeatedly to his thoughts. His patient seems to be telepathic without realizing it. Genuinely paranormal experiences, provided they exist, might be recognized by others but not by experiencers themselves. Even without the schizophrenic telling what he is hearing, genuinely psychic experiences might theoretically be recognizable.

It's not surprising that Tremmel uses the stereotypical mytheme of the "schizophrenic telepath" (see Evrard, 2011), because it is indicative of

the supposed boundary between psychopathology and parapsychology, normal and paranormal. Psychiatrists often report objective correlates of hallucinations and delusions of their patients (i.e., Chaperot, 2011), but the interpretation of these correlates as the proof of a paranormal gift is an idea which the clinician should beware. Indeed, the empirical failure to prove a "psi gift" with psychotic patients suggests they don't have a sustainable and controllable power (Evrard, 2011). To encourage such a vision of psychic abilities could increase the delusions instead of normalizing them, by further complicating the sort to be made between the perceptions from reality and those from his or her imagination. In fact, the clinician should reflect upon the clinical relevance, at this time of the therapy, to agree on the objective correlates of the patient's inner life. Ideally, the clinician should treat everything that comes from the patient as worthy of interest, starting with the voices he or she hears (Evrard, 2014b). It is instructive to look at the opposite example, like these delusions of paranoid jealousy, which are mainly based on undeniable objective elements. This does not preclude the patient to be in trouble or to put in trouble his or her entourage.

According to Tremmel (2014, p. 35), "The objective forms of exceptional experiences are neglected as they currently cannot easily be distinguished from the forms that symptoms of mental disorders take on." It turns out that my Ph.D. research was on finding differential criteria for ExE based on the forms and not on the contents (Evrard, 2014a; Evrard, in press). Nevertheless, even after this research, I don't think this differential diagnosis will be of any help to distinguish genuine spontaneous psi from symptoms of mental disorders, because such a division is based on the unfounded assumption that these two aspects can't coexist at the same time.

Parapsychology's Narrow Vision of the World

Tremmel wrote (2014, p. 25) that “parapsychology is not a research into any imaginable paranormal experience or phenomenon”, but that its focus is still larger than the one of anomalous psychology because it includes “ostensibly psychic experiences and phenomena” (i.e., spontaneous cases?), referring to the categories derivate from parapsychology or popular paranormal. In my opinion, it's hard to realize how experimental parapsychology carries its own filter on reality before having experience the clinical practice with ExE. The scope of this practice is much larger than the one of a “clinical parapsychology,” because it contains experiences that seem weird or anomalous even for an open-mind parapsychologist. With a neutral stance as the position of undecidability, the clinician can treat, for example, very traumatic abduction experiences without believing (or disbelieving) in the extraterrestrial hypothesis. One might think naively that the “parapsychological knowledge” would be of great help, but specialists of this clinical practice encourage first to have a strong psychopathological training and a multi-referential approach, as for transcultural psychiatry (Kramer, Bauer, & Hövelmann, 2012).

In fact, we welcome people who don't have “ostensible psychic experiences,” since we have plenty of prosaic hypotheses to understand their experiences as fully normal (pathological hallucinations, sleep paralysis, etc.). We also have people whose experiences don't fit in any categories or cross several categories. Thematic classification as such developed by the *Varieties of Anomalous Experiences* (written by many authors who have a parapsychological background) are confusing and unworkable in a clinical setting. For example, for editorial purposes, the editors divided chapters so that there is one on hallucinations, one on psi-related experiences, one on mystic experiences, etc. (Cardena et al., 2014). In real life, however, all these labels may apply to the same experience. It's

not uncommon that someone seeks help to understand if her telepathic feeling is psychopathological, or better explained by parapsychology or one or another religion; that's why German clinicians develop a phenomenological classification (the Doku-System) based only on what people describe, in order to leave a minimal space for concepts infiltrated with theories (Fach, 2011).

Conclusion

One might wonder if we can draw some knowledge about psi from the study of ExE. Although it might be possible, this article attempts to show that this is not obvious. ExE are not spontaneous cases waiting for a field study or an experimental extension, unless we mix the levels of logical analysis and the purposes. Parapsychological researchers would do well to take into account these distinctions rather than considering ExE as the new trendy term to talk about spontaneous psi.

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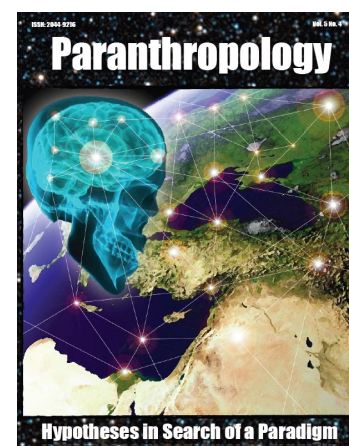
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Biography

Renaud Evrard is a clinical psychologist working in adult psychiatry and associate member at the psychology laboratory EA 3071 at the University of Strasbourg, France. In 2012, he obtained a Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Rouen, with a thesis on clinical differential practice with exceptional experiences. With Thomas Rabeyron, he co-founded in 2009 the *Center for Information, Research and Counselling on Exceptional Experience* (www.circee.org).

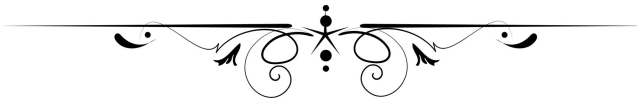


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A Pair of Synchronous Coincidences: How Three Mainstream Psychologists

“Accidentally” Helped Me Question Mainstream Psychology

Jennifer Lyke



Coincidences offer interesting opportunities to examine cause and effect. Almost everyone in our culture recognizes that coincidences occur randomly just by virtue of the fact that so many events happen; some that appear to be related to each other will eventually occur near each other in time. Jung (1973) was instrumental in drawing attention to the possibility that some of these co-occurrences might be meaningful to the experiencer, and he used these principles in both his professional and personal life. In our current culture, which emphasizes objective analysis above all others, meaningful interpretation of coincidences is sometimes viewed as wishful thinking at best and delusional at worst. People vary in their tendencies to draw meaningful inferences from their experiences and this characteristic is associated with such qualities as vitality, highly emotional states, high levels of self-reference, and hypomania (Beitman & Shaw, 2009).

What follows is the description of a series of events that may be interpreted as randomly occurring and objectively meaningless. However, as the experiencer of these events, I also offer another interpretation in which they take on more meaning. Interpretations of meaning are risky since there is no objective measure by which they can be determined to be right or wrong and therefore they do not fit easily into our cultural milieu that so strongly emphasizes objectivity and rationality. Yet a sense of meaning is vitally important to people's satisfaction with their lives (Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005), so I offer this series of events as an example for others who also strive to balance objectivity and subjectivity in their daily experienc-

es of reality.

The Background

I teach psychology courses at a small public college. My research investigates unconscious processes and altered states of consciousness, including some work on mediumship and the experiences of mental mediums. This is an important detail since it provided the mechanism for me to be drawn into the following series of events. Unbeknownst to me, the performing arts center at my school scheduled a performance by a well-known medium, which was advertised to the school community. The main event that set the rest of the sequence in motion was that another psychology faculty member, Professor A, began a campus-wide email debate about whether the school should be scheduling such a performance, given that, in her view, mediums are at best frauds and at worst detrimental to the mental health of the grieving. In particular, she suggested there needed to be a discussion regarding “critical thinking” after the performance in order to use the unfortunate event as an educational opportunity. The clear message of her email was that any clear-thinking individual should recognize the fraudulent nature of mediumship and a public discussion after the performance could make this fact clear to anyone who was still addled in the brain after the event.

A campus-wide email debated ensued with strong opinions on both sides of the issue of whether or not a demonstration of mental mediumship was a suitable performance for a college campus, and what response the academic community should



offer. Most disturbingly to me, another psychology faculty member, Professor B, contributed with a particularly scathing email regarding the fraudulent practices of mediums that somehow managed to compare them to serial killers. In the process, she also referred to a third psychology faculty member, Professor C, and his research from many years ago, in which he concluded, on the basis of his own experience, that the communications of mediums and psychics lack validity.

It is generally my strong preference to stay out of such public debates, but after my colleagues represented our department with these opinions, I felt the need to express my firm position that critical thinking about mediumship should involve more complexity than the opinions expressed in the emails thus far. So I wrote an email to that effect, citing current research from the ongoing scientific debate regarding validity of information obtained by mediums (Beischel & Schwartz, 2007; Kelly & Arcangel, 2011; O'Keeffe & Wiseman, 2005) and suggesting that everyone simmer down and critically think about their own opinions before assuming their intellectual superiority.

Needless to say, this was an emotional process for me. I was publicly verbalizing my opinion, which is already difficult, taking a stand opposing three of my colleagues, and coming out of the closet with my questionable research interests simultaneously. Writing the email took the better part of the afternoon, and I hesitated to send it until I had thought more thoroughly about my position. That is how I came to be driving home from work, thinking intensely about Professor A, who originally raised the issue, and what an appropriate response would be.

The First Incident

I live approximately sixty miles from the school where I work. On my way home on this particular day, I was driving directly from work to my children's school, which is about five miles from

my house. So for about an hour in the car I was thinking about the email situation and the risky nature of opposing a well-respected senior faculty member with expertise in a related field. I could not have been more focused on the intensity of the issue, which was calling on my intellectual integrity to respond in a way that could subject me to ridicule among my colleagues. When I turned the corner at a light about a mile from my children's school, I passed a woman walking the opposite direction on the sidewalk. Had I not been thinking about this issue, I might have completely missed the fact that it was Professor A, herself.

Passing someone on the sidewalk is not an inherently notable event, and to be fair, I know Professor A lives near my children's school, so it is not particularly unlikely that she would be walking on that street. However, I had driven that particular route hundreds of times before and never seen her walking on that street, so the fact that I happened to see her on the day I had been thinking so intensely about her definitely caught my attention.

The Second Incident

That evening I worked more on the email I was about to send, trying hard to articulate my position in an informed, objective way that might defuse the rampant emotion coming from all sides. In the meantime, Professor B sent another particularly inflammatory email and I knew I could no longer hold off on getting involved. I felt the need to defend mediums from her attack as well as other psychologists from being associated with such a narrow-minded perspective. So I sent the email and immediately began to worry about the fallout with Professor B, who was a friend and happened to have the office next door to me. We often ran across each other in the morning before classes, and I knew our next encounter would be uncomfortable due to the intense confrontation we were indirectly having through the email system.

The next morning on my way to school, I



thought about how I should handle seeing Professor B, and what I might say that would acknowledge our different opinions without either aggravating the conflict or backing down from my position. Before I went to my office, however, I needed to pick up some exams that had been graded automatically so I could return them to students in class that day. When I got to the office, the student worker looked through two boxes of a few hundred envelopes of professors' exams to find my envelope. The envelopes were all turned sideways in the boxes except for one in each box. The first one that was standing up had Professor B's name written in bold, black ink, and the second one that was standing up in the other box had Professor C's name. No other envelopes, including mine, were standing up in either of the boxes.

The Interpretations

This incident too is not necessarily notable. There are many possible reasons for computer services to have arranged those particular envelopes differently than all the others, and, like the first incident, had I not been concentrating so heavily on Professor B already, I might have overlooked her name and Professor C's name entirely. So what does this series of events mean? There are at least two answers.

The first answer is they mean nothing. They are curious coincidences that I find interesting solely because of my internal focus during those two days. None of the events is particularly statistically unlikely, given that Professor A lives in the neighborhood I was driving through, and Professors B and C use the same office as me to score exams. Although it is impossible to calculate exactly, even the likelihood of the combination of the events is not particularly small taking into consideration the limited number of people who might be walking on the street in that neighborhood and the limited number of professors who get their tests graded through that office.

In addition, it is clear that my prior thoughts about the three professors primed my attention to the cues that then appeared in the environment. A great deal of research has established that people see what they are prepared to see (e.g., Beitman, 2009), so for all I know, I've passed Professor A on the street and seen Professors B's and C's tests turned upwards many times before, but they only became notable when primed by the particular content of my thought process.

These are the rational interpretations of my experience. According to these interpretations, the universe continues to be a random set of events ordered by the cause and effect nature of physical reality, within which humans try to identify patterns that make their lives easier and sometimes, when no pattern is apparent, they make up stories to make the random nature of their existence feel less meaningless. The important part of the rational interpretation of coincidences is that any story one makes up that attributes meaning to the experience *cannot* be true because, in fact, there is no meaning to the universe.

The second interpretation is that this sequence of events was not only coincidental, but also synchronous. In other words, the events themselves were unrelated in terms of cause and effect, but their temporal placement was meaningful. Coincidences appear more meaningful to the person who experiences them than they do to an outside observer (Falk, 1989), which is certainly the case in this example. For anyone to understand how I subjectively experienced these events, they would have to experience my particular frame of mind within this unique set of circumstances, which is clearly impossible. At first, I was shocked to see Professor A on the street. I was struck by the match between my inner and outer realities, and I even imagined I had somehow manifested her there with the intensity of my focus. When I saw Professor B and C's envelopes the next day, the experience was that much more impactful due to having seen Professor A the day before. It was starting to seem as

though the universe was trying to tell me something.

What was the universe trying to tell me? For me, answering that question involves a creative process similar to dream interpretation. Most directly, I got the impression the universe was trying to tell me that not all experiences are random. That message is shocking enough for someone who has made an entire career out of indoctrinating young people into the scientific method, and I could have experienced that message alone as sufficient validation of my research interests in scientifically marginal topics, which was, after all, the reason I got involved in the email conversation in the first place.

After further consideration, I took an even more specific message from these incidents. The particular theme I perceived was that Professors A, B, and C were all going the wrong way. Professor A was walking the opposite way on the street, and Professors B's and C's tests were oriented the wrong way relative to the rest of the envelopes. If there could be a message, then the universe could be trying to tell me the mainstream psychology professors are actually the ones going the wrong way. In other words, I should stop doubting my view that unusual and unexplainable experiences are important although mainstream psychology views them as mundane and ridiculous. The universe might be trying to tell me I should continue to look beneath the superficial, materialist interpretations of experience for a deeper, more meaningful perspective, and I should continue to try to defend others who share that perspective from narrow minded critiques by the skeptical majority.

Conclusion

Which view is correct? I think they both are. It is tempting in our Western, materialist culture to conclude that either there is meaning in these coincidences or there is not, but perhaps both can be true simultaneously. Physical events occur

as consequences of cause and effect interactions that are so complex that they appear random at a macroscopic scale, and human lives can successfully be lived taking into consideration only this level of analysis. However, the interpretation of events as randomly generated does not actually exclude the interpretation of the events as personally meaningful. People do take messages from their experiences and they can feel fulfilled by the sense that they are deeply connected to forces larger than themselves.

Personally, I prefer a cognitive framework for understanding these experiences that errs neither too far on the side of scientific skepticism ("finding meaning is wishful thinking") nor too far on the side of emphasizing subjective interpretation ("everything happens for a reason"). This perspective requires the constant tension of a balancing act, but from within it the universe is neither an empty and alien conglomeration of molecules evolving pointlessly for eternity, nor is it a personified entity that somehow conspires to send messages I must be alert to identify and decipher. I believe the universe is large enough to encompass both realities, so I will continue to notice coincidences and contemplate whether or not they may contain messages that imply, as Carl Jung says, "Synchronicity is an ever present reality for those who have eyes to see" (Jung, 1973, p. 109).

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Biography

Jennifer Lyke is a counseling psychologist and Associate Professor of Psychology at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey. She teaches courses in consciousness and anomalous experiences and sees clients in private practice

1/2
OFF!

In ***The Legend of the Mind. Survey of 150 years of Parapsychology*** (*La légende de l'esprit. Enquête sur 150 ans de parapsychologie*) psychologist Renaud Evrard explores the history of the relationship between psychology and parapsychology in France, from 1852 to 2002.

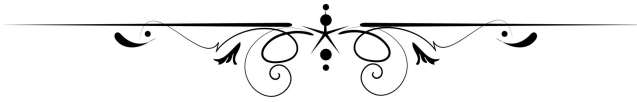
This 600-page book, to be published in September 2015, focuses on 10 figures of this intersection between psychology and parapsychology, among them Pierre Janet, Charles Richet, Pierre Curie, Eugène Osty, and René Warcollier. Drawing on several years of academic research, consultations of specialized archives, and interviews with researchers' descendants, this work attempts to fill the gaps in the official historiography.

Order this book (written in French) before April 2015 and get an exceptional half price (15€) and other benefits, through a secured online payment following this link: <http://tinyurl.com/legendesprit>



Dream about the Green Van

Lester Lomax



This report is about a dream that I experienced in the 1970s that seemed to have been designed to allay any fear that I may have had about using precognitive remote viewing. I dreamed that I was a boy. Grandpa and grandma type persons were talking to me in the Danish language. We were standing in front of their cottage. There was an unreal cast to the atmosphere. I didn't speak Danish, but I understood every word.

They pointed down to a fat brown puppy that was on the ground near my feet. They said, "See, there is nothing to fear about this cute puppy." I looked down at the puppy, and it turned its rear end towards me while shaking its tail, then as I looked at it, it turned into a new van of a rare color of green, with a spare tire on its rear, which the van wagged as though it was a tail. It was a funny sight, and I remembered the dream. I felt as though I had been coaxed into being prepared to be brave during an event that was going to happen soon.

Within a few days, I was driving on the freeway, and we were approaching another freeway up ahead. My passenger was a young family member. I felt as though I should entertain the youngster on the trip. I said, "Let's try guessing what the vehicle on the next freeway will be." I then saw, as an internal image, the green van that was in the recent dream. I described it, and then I drove onto the other freeway. A van of the same exact rare color was in the place on the freeway where the onramp connects to the freeway.

We were impressed and we ventured guesses for the vehicles on the next off-ramp, which was about ten miles ahead. Two vehicles were waiting at a stop sign at the off-ramp. My guess was in front, a pickup truck, with two tone color, etc.; and

the passenger's guess was a large brown car that looked like a car that we knew about. The same year, model and make of car. Both guesses were "hits."

After that initial event, I was able to successfully precognitively "see" and successfully describe the vehicle that would be at the designated place on the next freeway, where the onramp that we would be on merged into the freeway.

I tried the remote viewing with any passengers who would accept the offer to observe the event. The attempts were invariably successful, in that the vehicle that was in or moving through the place where the onramp connects to the freeway was invariably described.

I tried the remote viewing with various types of people, to determine if the observers had any effect on the remote viewing. Most of the observers and the steering helpers expressed surprise when they saw the vehicle. Many of the descriptions were exactly like the vehicle. Some of the vehicles were one of a kind, e. g., "a yellowish green car with a black trunk lid and a black hood."

There was one attempt that was successful, but the observer, who was driving his vehicle, and who was a scientist that had worked for a secretive agency of the federal government seemed upset when I tried extra hard to send out a complex packet of inquiring information, to the target site, in the proximal future. Not only did I guess the identity of the one of a kind car, but I obviously affected the driver and passenger in that vehicle, who acted as though they were affected by the remote viewing, in a very noticeable and revealing manner.

One of the most complex "hits," with an observer who had worked as an employee, was of



“a large stake truck, with old white paint, with a load of one-inch diameter copper tubing, each 10 feet long, and each wrapped in kraft paper, with masking tape every 8 inches on each tube. The load is flat on the bed, with no rear stakes.”

The one finding worth mentioning in this brief paper is that I invariably saw the vehicle when I closed my eyes, if there was enough distance between the attempt and the designated target area. When I experienced the perception of an internal image, with my eyes closed, with someone else steering the vehicle, it was invariably a remarkably exact description of the vehicle to be at that designated site.

In one attempt, I saw a concrete curb and gutter, a cigarette butt, and small tufts of grass, and no vehicle. When we got to the target area, we saw only those things and found that the freeway was blocked, and no traffic was in our area. In all other cases, the background looked as though it was moving and blurred, and the moving vehicle looked like it was standing still.

I tried the method with anyone who would help to steer the vehicle, or who would approve of my attempt, while they drove their vehicle. The attempts never failed, if I perceived an internal image, and I almost invariably saw an internal image. In one case, I didn't see any image, but another designated target area was up ahead, on an interchange, then I got an image that was a “hit,” within three minutes.

I kept no records. I tried this remote viewing method many years with many observers. I tried the method when I was alone, and waiting at a cross street for the next car. Those attempts were all successful, as well, with no witnesses. Overall, I think that I had over fifty “hits” on vehicles.

The last attempt was revealing. I had not tried the method for several years. I stood on a third story balcony overlooking a busy street, and I guessed a green car. Then I opened my eyes to see many cars drive by, all of which were not green! In the morning, the next day, I walked out on the ground

level, and walked up to the curb. The green target car slowly drove by, with the driver looking at me, as though he was teaching me something.

It turned out that I had to be as close as possible to the target so as to not lose my “inquiring packet.” By being proximal to the target, and seeing the target in real time, after remote viewing it, precognitively, from a distance, the process that ensures replications was fulfilled. Reabsorbing the packets may operate to avoid the decline in hits experienced by remote viewers, and the ensuing “flakiness” that seems to ensue when remote viewing in enemy territory without physically retrieving the complex packets.

By invariably seeing the target in real time, as close as possible to it, rather than from a balcony, the act of viewing may make the attempt appear to have been an expected event. That retrocausal effect, possibly caused by the wave domain, as it is enticed to observe the activity, ensures that the remote viewing is successful, and ensures that the attempt does not inadvertently cause adjustments in the recording of all events as they occur, as well.

In other words, I believe that I was invariably successful in remote viewing the identity of vehicles to be at designated target places, up ahead, on freeways, because the supernatural domain was teaching and guiding me all along. It helped me to avoid causing problems by influencing me to not use the ability in unhelpful ways.

The dream did help me to be brave, and to learn a lot, from the best possible teacher, the cause of the phenomenon itself.

Biography

Lester Lomax wants to leave a record of his many years of experiences with the paranormal so to help others understand and deal with their experiences. For JEEP readers and for scientists, he hopes his experientialist's sharing of tacit knowledge may be his most useful contribution. At 76 years old, he is mostly involved in worrying about his 8 beautiful grandchildren.

Water Under the Rocks: A Firsthand Account of the Historical U.S. Visit of The Felix Experimental Group of Physical Mediumship,

August–September, 2013

August Goforth



This ambitious report attempts to convey as much relevant information as possible about the recent U.S. sittings of the physical medium, K.M. of the Felix Experimental Group (FEG) of Frankfurt, Germany. This writer attended two of the four séances in upstate New York on August 15 and 17 and one of the two in Springfield, New Jersey, on September 1, 2013. Sittings were also held in Reno, Nevada between the NY and NJ events.

The three séances I attended were quite lengthy—3 to 3.5 hours on average. Each conformed to a strict template of carefully-outlined procedures, evolved from the many sittings of the FEG in Germany and other global venues since 2004. The limited space here must take into consideration the amount of time involved and the depth of information revealed in the sittings—including the staggering amount of manifested physical phenomena and evidence transmitted by the “spirit chemists” and spirit “Hans Bender.”

Because it was not possible to take or record notes in the pitch darkness of the sittings, I must rely on my own exceptional but not infallible memory, further enhanced from my own spirit guides—including Tim—and from interviews with several fellow attendees. I wish to acknowledge their collaboration with thanks for their thoughts and time. Any errors or lapses in information presented here are entirely my own and for which I accept responsibility.

Cassadaga

A rural community of less than 900 people, Cassadaga Village is snuggled in the foothills of

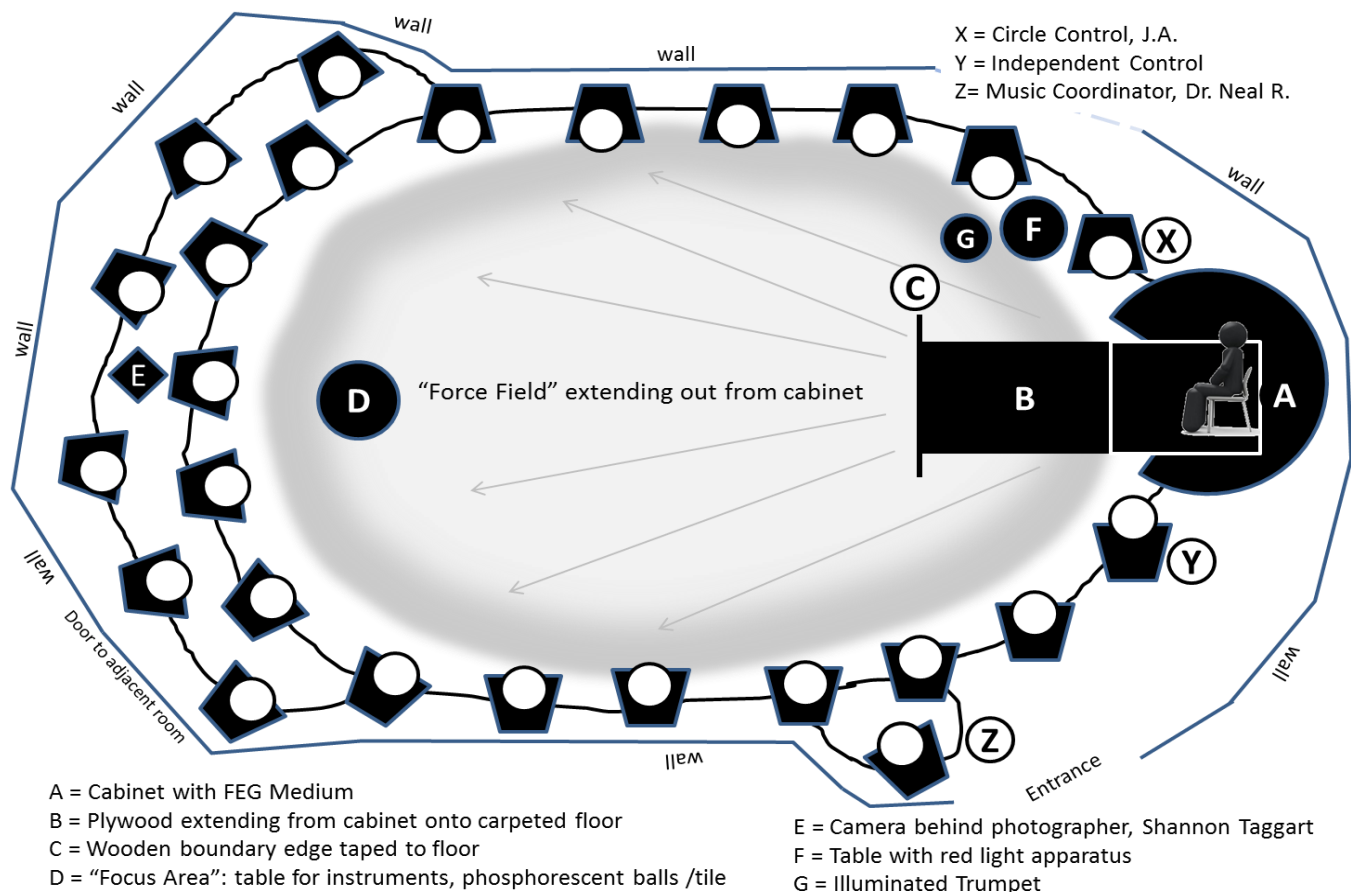
the Allegheny Mountain Range in Chautauqua County, New York—not far from Lake Erie, one of the Great Lakes. Cassadaga is a Seneca word meaning “water under the rocks,” possibly so-named because during dry weather many of the local spring-fed streams vanish, settling into the gravel base while continuing to echo audibly but invisibly; it is also practically a stone’s throw from Lily Dale, the famed Victorian community of Spiritualists—known formally as the Lily Dale Assembly.

Although endlessly fascinating in its spiritualistic charm, Lily Dale must be left for another day’s visit. Instead, we journey to *TiOmimé*, the home of Dr. Neal Rzepkowski in our peaceful hamlet, the scene of several sittings which, while boggling belief, deserve to have their stories heard. The reader is now asked to be still and draw the mind inward to a state of quiet receptivity, while refraining from prematurely judging the mysteries of the unknown and unseen—any more than one might doubt, without exploration, that one is hearing water under the rocks.

The Circle

The Circle Configuration at the Cassadaga Sittings (Figure 1)

The room is irregular in shape, conforming to the geodesic dome structure of our host’s home. The general useable space was about 22 feet x 12.5 feet. The ceiling height is 3 inches shy of 8 feet. From the back of the cabinet to the back of the farthest second row chair was 18 feet and the width



was 11 feet. The sitters' chairs in the first row near the cabinet were a tight 2–3 inches from a wall behind them. The door at the back was closed, locked and securely covered with blackout material, which was also used to cover equally secured windows, as well as the entrance to the space.

There were 24 sitters on average for the two sittings I attended. This was 6 more than the favored number for the space, and so required a second row added at the back. This oversight later serendipitously provided some insight into some of the psychic energies at work.

The Medium's cabinet "A" was constructed using a hula-hoop suspended from the ceiling as a kind of curtain rod, draped with fairly heavy black cloth, which could be opened and closed as needed by the circle controls. The plywood board "B" was placed on the wall-to-wall carpet to enable the Spirit Control to easily slide the entranced Medium in his chair in and out of the cabinet as needed. The wooden edge "C" taped to the floor is a predetermined boundary across which the Medium may not

pass, and historically has never transgressed. This boundary was faithfully respected during all the Cassadaga and Springfield sittings.

Cuppa or Tasse?

The Medium modeled the German Spiritist (GS) versus the English Spiritualism (ES) approach by making a point to speak and shake hands with each sitter before the séance to establish a particular psychic impression of "who's who" and "what's what." It appeared that both he and his spouse used a particular kind of inner decision-making process to determine specific roles to be performed during the séance after receiving several offers from volunteers, as well as refining the seating configuration while alternating female with male sitters as best as possible. According to the Medium, the *modus operandi* of the chemists is also dissimilar from that of U.K.-based Physical Mediums due to the different socio-cultural backgrounds.



The Roles

The Sitters. In the case of FEG's "German modus operandi" energy is drawn not only from the Medium but from the Sitters, and then almost immediately replaced as the Spirit Scientists gather and prepare psychic substance for the experiments. Sitters sit "in chain"—i.e., joined hands—for almost the entire séance, which helps to gather, circulate and increase energy, while ensuring that a possible fraudulent helper or mischievous infiltrator cannot act. Sitters are also required to sing, which according to the Medium, not only provides energy but is "demonstrative to Spirit," showing that the sitters are there in an affirmative way. The *mood* of a circle is primary, and Hans explained early on that there are only two kinds of sitters that may be present—one of assent, awe and joy, the other of dissent, fear and skepticism. Not singing, and/or focusing on the random skeptical thoughts that may arise from what one is experiencing will cause leaks in the energy flow or even corrupt it.

Those who are considered prime sitters are specifically ones with previous experience of physical and other mediumship modalities, including mediums, developing mediums and other psychically-skilled; and researchers who are unbiased. Generally suitable is the combination of a positive attitude of openness, healthy curiosity, and a desire to learn.

The Medium. K.M. is a physical medium who demonstrates ectoplasmic manifestations, levitation, and apportionation. He freely assents to being controlled by the Spirit Control, Hans Bender. The Medium must first enter and remain in a trance state of the deepest sort, which he achieves via a technique known as holotropic breathing [also modeled after the GS approach]. When the final depth of his trance state is reached, the Medium reports such complete dissociation that his consciousness no longer identifies with the bioform of his body, and he can only think and speak of it in terms as "the Medium." The elements of darkness

and certain music also speed up this process and were used during the sittings. The sitters are advised that once the Medium is in the cabinet and the entrance sealed over, they will hear him begin the hyperventilating breathwork, which may sound uncomfortable and unpleasant. Full trance is reached in a fairly short time, and Hans Bender can then achieve full control of the Medium's nervous system.

Circle Leader and Control. This high-security role is regularly assumed by regular circle member, J.A., who sits at the right of the cabinet where she diligently monitors the Medium's position, safety and health at all times. The Circle Leader takes charge of the Medium's right side by vigilantly holding his right hand and reporting at key points that the connection is secure; his right leg is also kept under control with her other hand. She also must listen extremely closely to Hans Bender, the Medium's Spirit Control, for his explicit instructions on when to open and close the cabinet curtains; when to use the red flashlight and/or the red lamp on the dimmer switch, and other orders regarding the ebb and flow of all events that occur or are attempted over the course of the evening. When not using the flashlight, her hand was controlled by the sitter next to her. Sitters must immediately and explicitly obey J.A.'s directives for silence, to listen, to "break chain/resume chain," to resume singing, to enter and leave the room, and so on.

Independent Control and Circle Assistant. This dual role is performed by a volunteer sitter vetted by the Medium and the Circle Leader, who takes charge of the Medium's left side by vigilantly holding his left hand and reporting at key points that the connection is secure; his left leg is also monitored with the other hand. This role also includes assisting the Circle Leader by following her directives, particularly regarding the opening and closing of the left side of the cabinet curtain.

Spirit Control. The complex role of Hans Bender as Spirit Control had also been pre-



determined by a spirit group referred to as “the Chemists.” He has the role of Master of Ceremonies, focusing everyone’s attention on the “stage” as well as the environment while infusing the group with his warmth, humor and authority. He performs very much as the conductor of an orchestra, utilizing the physical, emotional and psychological aspects of time and space to coordinate and direct the flow of events from beginning to end, once control of the Medium had been established. He acts as the facilitator and moderator, listening for instructions directed by the Chemists. Although Hans utilizes some of the time to expound on certain metaphysical philosophies and share Spirit opinions on the state of earthly affairs, he limits his cross-talk mostly to the Circle Leader, seldom speaking directly with anyone else—at least in this configuration. This is not like many “English Circles,” where interactive dialogue between Spirit and sitter is sought out, achieved and then developed.

The Chemists. Also referred to as “The Spirit Team,” they claim to be a scientific membership of undisclosed number who participates in the background; all contend to have once been some kind of parapsychological researcher when on Earth. Specifically, several controlled experiments are attempted to mirror the presence and density of “ectoplasmic compaction” in the room, first in darkness and semi-darkness, and then in red light. Their tasks appear to include gathering sitter-generated psychic energy; directing and monitoring electromagnetic and other energies, including light; preparing special non-terrestrial “chemicals” to mix with the various terrestrial energies needed to produce and maintain the ectoplasmic manifestations. The experiments tend to run and repeat in a specific order to produce specific phenomena, which is the building of a kind of energy matrix up and out from the cabinet, referred to as “the force field.” It also seemed to this writer that the Chemists may have been helping facilitate the entrance of various people in spirit into the Force Field,

who were called “Visitors” and who are attracted to the circle with hopes of presenting themselves in various ways to certain loved ones present in the circle.

Music Coordinator. Music — particularly robust, cheerful, inspirational singing—is a well-established part of many circles in order to produce and raise energy, while emotionally bonding the sitters, which is then utilized by the Spirit Scientific Team to achieve various phenomena.

The Science

FEG sits for scientific exploration and experimentation, and so the “template” used for sittings have an *objective* structure. Following are some brief descriptions of essential components that were integral to our circle’s experiments.

The Toys

A small tambourine, toy xylophone and hand rattle were placed on top of the overturned plastic bucket, which was also the stage for a 6x6 inch luminescent panel and three ping-pong-sized luminescent balls which were made of a kind of Styrofoam. There was also the traditional medium’s trumpet, which was two feet long with an opening diameter of about 6 inches, and marked with small strips of luminescent paper. A cotton handkerchief with 8 tabs of the glow paper adhered to it was additionally used in an experiment.

The Force Field & Focus Area

In the illustration of the Cassadaga Circle formation (Figure 1, Page 31) the central area is seen to be covered by a grey area, which represents a kind of spiritual dimensional energy matrix the chemists call the “Force Field,” which is also referred to as “the U Form.” This matrix seems to be their first central goal, and once achieved provides the ground for all ensuing experiments and physi-



cal manifestations. It also serves as a “holding area” to contain the waxing and waning psychic energies of the sitters, as well as merging them into a harmonious whole. Hans Bender explained that through the efforts of the Chemists the matrix emerges into our terrestrial dimension, starting from within the Medium’s cabinet and then advancing forward a little at a time until reaching the “Focus Area” (“D” at Figure 1) as marked by the overturned bucket with instruments on it, approximately 6 feet from the cabinet. It does not extend further than the boundary created by the sitters at the back, who are about two feet away from the Focus Area, a fact which became more apparent later on by those in the second row. Because of the Force Field’s importance and to preserve its integrity, everyone is cautioned to keep their hands and feet as close to the body as possible and never to reach or “fish” out into it. Venturing bodily or tossing objects into it are absolutely *verboten*, and sitters are instructed to speak out loudly if they sense someone has violated the space in any way. Sitters must also link hands throughout most of the sitting—known as “make chain”—and unless instructed by the Circle Leader to “break/resume chain” maintain the contact which raises and maintains energy charges, as well as keeps all hands accounted for in the dark.

The Experiments

Cassadaga, August 15

As Circle Leader, J.A. warmly greeted every sitter one at a time as they entered the space, respectfully frisked each as part of the safety protocol, and then indicated which seat should be taken. As this ensued the FEG Medium, wearing only briefs, was being searched by a male volunteer in a separate room before putting his clothes back on. The Medium had shared that in the past he had submitted to the humiliation of cavity searches as well, but had decided that such indignities were not

worth the suffering and no longer consents to them.

When all were seated the Music Coordinator played some background Native American chants, and the Medium was ushered into the cabinet, his arms raised to show nothing in them other than his bottle of water. The door to the room was closed, locked and sealed with heavy dark blackout cloth. J.A. made sure the Medium had water within reach and a small towel for the intense perspiring ahead. Everyone was reminded to call out when they saw or heard any phenomena since the total darkness would conceal everything. The music was slowly lowered and turned off, and then the lights. As darkness enveloped us, Dr. Neal began our work with a Lakota prayer.

The Medium then began his series of holotropic breathing maneuvers—which sounded as strange and unpleasant as we had been warned—and descended into full trance state within fifteen minutes. Almost immediately Hans gained control and began speaking with the Medium’s vocal apparatus, albeit in very haltingly and almost childlike German. The Medium had cautioned us not to fixate on the “accelerated speech” of the control, meaning that Hans would sound like someone exaggerating the speech of an older person; it soon balanced out and sounded normal. Encouraged by J.A., Hans quickly gained strength to fully access the Medium’s English and loudly greeted the sitters who greeted him back. He immediately called for music and singing, and everyone heartily sang along to the first of many tunes the Music Coordinator would give us that night from the prepared CD mix. The feelings of love, fun and excitement was palpable—we had lift off!

Almost immediately, loud but oddly distant, blunt-sounding rapid knocks were heard on the ceiling over the cabinet. They seemed to arc out in semi-circles across the ceiling, and as if they were coming from within it. Several of us shouted out that we could hear them, and they slowed to a stop within a few quick minutes. Very tiny sparkles like diamonds twinkled near the ceiling close to the

cabinet. In no time there was already enough happening to start causing sensory overload.

Pre-séance, the Medium explained we would likely experience “small animal phenomena”—which are not pets in spirit but the “psychospiritual substance” of the growing ectoplasmic energy. And so we might also experience “little somethings” racing around the room and briefly touching us. Information from our own dreams and subconscious images could also be mirrored by the beginning ectoplasmic energies and then be drawn back to us with bumps and caresses.

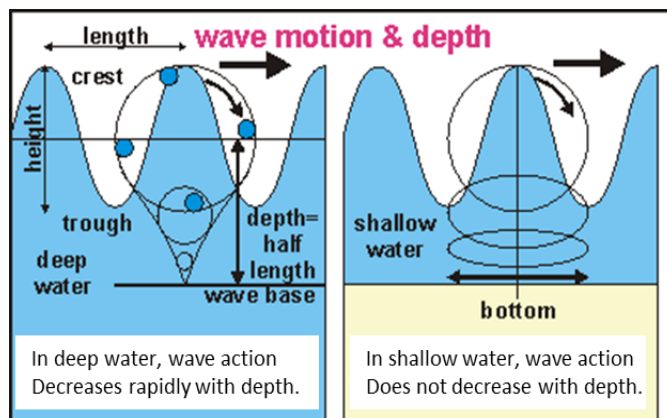
Indeed, several Cassadaga sitters reported hearing the barking of a small dog as the raps were sounding, and at least one felt a small animal put its paws on his legs, as if standing up; someone else felt an entity briefly jump up onto their lap and then back off. It was never determined if these were real animals or “little somethings.”

Caught up with my intentional focus on the Force Field, I was deeply intrigued and wanted to learn all about it. I could psychically feel and see the Force Field surging forward and then backward in waves. Seen clairvoyantly from above, each wave had the shape of an arc—a movement perhaps best described as *torque*. It was like watching someone methodically scythe their wave through a field of hay. As each wave crested there was also an inner rising spiral movement that pulsed upwards, increasing the height of each wave as it also pulsed forward until the ceiling had been reached. As the field progressed, the waxing and waning of its increasing strength felt like a pulsation, which began to emit an odd feeling of vibrational resonance. This final movement was like the cresting of a wave moving into a beach. The U-form of the line of sitters acted as a barrier to the “water” of the force field. We were now at the beach on a *very* special island.

I then realized that some kind of relationship was being established between the movement of the force field and that of everyone’s

breathing, heartbeat and even one’s blood flow as it spiraled throughout their body. This was clearly *entrainment*, which is what happens when two separate pendulums in the same room become synchronized in movement, for example. This convergence of energy—a merging of oscillations—can be seen in Nature, such as when fireflies start flashing in unison. The orbits of moons around planets also show similar behavior. My guides then instructed me that the very brain waves of each person in the room were being raised to a unified frequency, resulting in an entrainment of the left and right sides of the brain. Study Figure 2 for a few minutes to get an initial idea of what I’m trying to express.

Figure 2



As the force field was surging forward into the U-shape, and as soon as the rapping stopped, sitters began to exclaim as they felt spirit touches on their face, hands, and squeezes of knees and shoulders. I got a sense of the size and movement of the wave cycles as they arced in and out by aurally mapping the surprised cries of each person who got touched, which seemed to start closest to the cabinet. Then more people cried out as the wave surged forward a little more each time, until those sitting at the back were also reporting being touched.

I was touched several times on the back of my legs and hands, and once my nose felt like it was tweaked by fingers. I was especially startled by someone lovingly rubbing the back of my right



ear, while gently pulling on the hair above it. Although it felt just like Tim, I later learned that he had asked the Chemists to greet me this way for him—fascinatingly, he has somehow “transferred” his exact touch—like a recording—to the Chemists who then replayed it for me. My hands were held by the sitters to my left and right and my chair was pushed back against a wall, so only something in spirit form could have touched me in that way from behind. Tim would also send me another such greeting—albeit a bit more intimate—in the sitting at Springfield.

Experiment #1 – Cassadaga– The Lights

Hans advised the first experiment was to produce free-flying spirit lights; music and singing proceeded. In a quick minute bright white light was seen traveling up and down in a pulsating line from within the cabinet. Several sitters reported spots of light glowing on the ceiling and then the floor for several seconds. Hans explained that the lights were in some way directly connected with each sitter, even though seen as moving unconnectedly. They carried healing energy, and even if none approached certain people we were assured that all would still benefit in some way. The floor and ceiling “spots” stopped for a few seconds, and then a tiny bright yellow-green pearl of light flew from the cabinet to the center of the room, first hovering and zipping from one spot to another, then arcing up and vanishing into the ceiling. Others appeared and followed suit until the room was filled with them—some white, others pink, red, or blue-white. Hans had mentioned that some might see the substance of the lights moved around the room by “structured hands” but did not give any more details about what this was or how it’s formed. At times I saw something of the structure that was holding the light, but only in shadow. Another sitter reported seeing a “pinkish flesh-colored tube-like structure” holding the light.

As the light activity began to die down,

something seemed to be interfering with the CD player as the music started skipping, then starting and stopping. Dr. Neal struggled to get it working again, and fearing that it might not, led everyone in singing a haunting invocation in order to keep the musical energy flowing. He would sing a phrase which we then repeated. After we finished, the CD player resumed without further problems.

Experiment #1 – Springfield– The Lights

As at Cassadaga, this experiment began with the appearance of a single yellow-green light, after white light pulsed for a few seconds in the cabinet. Then more lights appeared—different sizes, some small as a pea, others like large pearls, zipping and hovering about in the same intelligent behavior as before. The lights quickly banded together and then increasingly focused on me and the sitter directly to my left and right. We each cried out as the lights began to *physically* touch us! I wouldn’t describe them as gentle touches, but more like brisk “boinking”—or like rubber bugs hitting the windshield. Although unhurt, the three of us were tickled and poked by this flock of Tinkerbells until we were crying “Uncle!” while laughing and shouting the whole time.

One of them glided up to my left hand and grabbed the flesh between my thumb and forefinger—it looked as if the light had split into two finger-like structures to do this, and it felt rubbery. I could see a faint structure like a small tail tapering off from the fingers. Its shape and intelligent movement reminded me of a dragonfly. It tugged on my thumb for a bit and then let go and sailed off, only to be followed by another one that careened into my chest—quickly tweaked my right nipple—and then jetted away. I share this true but slightly embarrassing fact for the sake of science. I felt that this was another special greeting from Tim, because I had been feeling him so strongly just a few seconds before that tears were running down my face from the strong waves of emotion



sweeping through me. I then experienced a kind of dislocation that brought me to a private dimension where we could join one another for a few seconds, and we embraced in an ecstatic merging of spirit. This has only happened to me once before years ago.

Experiment #2 – Cassadaga – The Orchestra

This was the first of the levitation experiments. Refer to “A” in Figure 1, showing the small overturned plastic bucket that served as a table, upon which were placed small musical instruments—rattle, tambourine, and toy xylophone. Results appeared to be in direct conjunction with the completion of the force field—meaning that the movement of the instruments signaled that the Force Field had been successfully developed to its full extent by reaching the Focus Area (“D” at Figure 1) as marked by the bucket, then sending back some kind of “ping” to the Chemists. Once they received this signal they knew they could begin the experiment, which was simply to make contact with and move the various musical instruments. Now less than 20 minutes into the séance, the instruments were first heard to make faint taps and jingling, which quickly increased in volume and speed. Some of them could be heard to thump on the bucket, while others fell or were tossed on the floor, where they continued to make musical noise. The sitters were singing to music while this was going on but the instruments did not keep time to it, which may have been an indication of the strength of the force field.

I wondered why the instruments were not marked with glow-tape so we could see their movements, and so clairvoyantly asked my guides to inquire of the Chemists about this for me. Their answer was that they wanted to stimulate the sitters’ physical senses one at a time, so the instruments were used to first sensitize the hearing, but without a visual distraction that would otherwise impede the learning process and thus memory. The pitch

darkness was a perfect background to isolate the senses in this way.

Eventually the activity of the instruments slowed, giving off an occasional weak jingle now and then, until they fell silent after hopping to the floor. [There were no exceptional differences between the two séances.]

Experiment #2 – Springfield – The Orchestra

This experiment was much the same as at Cassadaga, although the activity was more energetic and lasted longer, and on this night the instruments kept time with the music. Someone had brought a new rattle as a gift for Spirit, which was happily received and vigorously used.

Experiment #3 – Cassadaga – The Balls

When the Medium was safely behind the closed cabinet curtains, the Circle Leader was allowed to take the normal flashlight and move into the force field to recover the musical instruments, which had scattered widely around the Focus Area. She placed three small Styrofoamish balls—the size of golf balls—onto the overturned bucket which marked the Focus Area. She used the small normal flashlight to illuminate the balls, which were coated in luminescent pigment. J.A. returned to her seat, total darkness resumed, and almost immediately the balls began making tiny halting, shuddering movements, and then shifting around and trading places—I was reminded of the shell game with peas. Many of us could also see formless shadows, some very dark, others opaque, that hovered over the glowing balls for brief seconds. In less than five minutes all three balls had dropped to the floor and continued moving around. One of them moved across the carpet—about 4 feet—and stopped between my feet, and then seemed to be trying to crawl up my left leg. But perhaps it didn’t have the energy, and so stopped to rest by my left foot. Hans continually asked us what we could see



so he could report back to the chemists.

This verifying of activity was repeated many times through all the experiments, and suggests that when Hans was behind the closed curtains and so unable to see through the Medium's physical eyes, had to ask us what we saw and heard. It also suggests that the Chemists were limited in their ability to see and hear us in the room, and relied on Hans reporting to them. Hans explained that the balls were moving as a response to beginning ectoplasmic compaction, which would be seen or sensed as the shadows moving over the balls. [There were no exceptional differences between the two séances.]

Experiment #3 – Springfield – The Balls

This experiment concluded with little variation from the Cassadaga events.

Experiment #4 – Cassadaga – Hand Shadows

Following established protocol, J.A. was allowed to return to the Focus Area to quickly recover the balls. She placed a 6x6 inch panel that was covered with luminescent paper onto the bucket, and charged the panel with the small flashlight. While she did this, Hans announced "We have some Visitors that have found us" and who were somehow related to sitters in the room. The Chemists would try to enable the Visitors to make their presence known as physically as possible. He elucidated further that because the Visitors would be very new to this they might not be able to maintain contact for very long, but they would try. As with the glowing balls, it was within 2 or 3 minutes that definite shapes could be seen, almost as if resting directly on the panel. They began to form into the outlines of fingers which crept over the edge—sometimes only two or three, but eventually an entire hand which flexed, opening and closing. Best described as a silhouette, the hand appeared to end at the wrist. The experiment ended when the panel

flew off the bucket and onto the floor. As usual, Hans called out for sitters to report what they were seeing, and to also have the Circle Controls verify that the Medium had not moved from his chair. [There were no exceptional differences between the two séances.]

Experiment #4 – Springfield – Hand Shadows

Experiment concluded with little variation from the Cassadaga events.

Experiment #5 – Cassadaga – The Hanky

After allowed to retrieve the illuminated panel from the floor, Hans announced that we would try to get results from "the hanky." Met with enthusiastic cheers, this experiment requires particularly more advanced energies to enable a Visitor to do it, but was not always achievable. It was not attempted on August 15 but was and succeeded on August 17. J.A. was permitted to use the regular flashlight to illuminate 8 small tabs of phosphorescent paper that were affixed to the corners and mid-edges of the white cotton handkerchief. The sitter who was 3 chairs away from the Medium's right side was asked to hold the hanky by one corner, and to very slowly and carefully extend their arm out into the force field, but to remain absolutely still. Once darkness resumed the sitter would hopefully feel tugging on the hanky, but they were not to let go no matter how hard it tugged. If and when the tugging would become upward and upward only, then the sitter should let go.

In a matter of seconds everyone could see the illuminated outline of the hanky jerking in sharp movements every-which-way, as if struggling to free itself from the sitter's grasp. When the hanky was clearly trying to move upward, the sitter released it and it began fluttering around the room like an oversized manic butterfly. It flew to the sitters across the room and then back to its "owner." It seemed to tease each person it came up to as if



daring them to grab onto it, but as everyone was safely in chain, nobody could make any such move. Eventually it returned to its owner and then rested there on the floor. This was deemed a great success, especially because it meant that at least one of our two Visitors was still with us and had gained in strength and presence.

Experiment #5 – Springfield – The Hanky

Hans announced that several Visitors had found our sitting and were keen on joining us. As in the other sittings where this experiment was attempted, the third sitter from the Mediums's right was chosen to hold the hanky. However, the sitter was so overwhelmed by the tugging that they couldn't hang on to it, and so it was quickly pulled away, only to fall to the floor. In the interest of time the second sitter to the right assumed the role, and proved to be of sterner stuff. The hanky seemed to become increasingly frustrated as it tried all kinds of tricks to release itself from the sitter's grasp; the sitter was roaring with laughter as the competition got fiercer.

Not until the movements began pulling upward did the sitter release it, and the hanky seemed so relieved and overexcited that it appeared to act as if it had just been released from jail! For almost 5 minutes it flapped around the room, up to the ceiling, across to a sitter across the room where it "sat" on their face for a second before flying off, then back to do it again. Eventually it stopped its movements when it landed on the floor behind that sitter, and J.A. retrieved it when the all-safe was cleared.

Experiment #6 – Cassadaga– The Trumpet

The trumpet was placed in front of the cabinet while we were in chain and sang. It's not totally clear, but it seemed as if the Medium's foot had kicked out and sent the trumpet flying into the force field, and stayed motionless where

it lay about six inches from the Focus Area. Hans then directed us to loudly count down from five, and when we reached zero, to squeeze our neighbor's hands and hold it for several seconds. Somehow this would give the chemists a "boost" to cross an energy threshold of some kind. We dutifully squeezed and continued holding tightly while shouting out encouraging words, and instantly the trumpet rose into the air and began swirling around the room—up near the ceiling, then down to the floor, then back and forth. As it gained control of its movements it flew up to individual sitters as if to have a closer look, sometimes tapping them on top of the head, forehead, shoulders, chest, arms and legs.

I was tapped several times, and once it raced across the room directly at my head and then stopped no more than an inch from my face. Although the glow tape was quickly dimming it still seemed extremely bright to me—the sitter on my left said it had lit up my entire face for a brief second, and would have given anything for a photo of my expression. After what seemed a long time the trumpet finally stopped in midair near the Focus Area and dropped to the floor. This was actually the signal from the Chemists that the next and final experiment was ready to begin. [There were no exceptional differences between the two séances.]

Experiment #6 – Springfield– The Trumpet

This time Hans clearly used the Medium's sitting body to kick the trumpet to get it out into the Force Field, because he asked everyone to be very quiet and then said in an intense tone, "Watch the trumpet...watch the trumpet...*watch it....watch it....*" and then gave it a perfect kick out into the dark. It flew almost 6 feet through the air and landed on the tile floor at the Focus Area, yet didn't bounce or roll, but lay perfectly still. Hans let out a belly laugh that lasted so long that everyone was soon laughing with him. This was a great

strategy of using humorous actions to raise more energy for the trumpet. As before, everyone counted down from 5 to 0 and squeezed hands. The trumpet arose in an instant and began speeding around the room like a race car, much faster than I'd ever seen.

The trumpet circled the room a few times to visit different sitters, maybe tapping them playfully, while showing off with complex aerial antics. As it circled the room in dizzying swoops and swirls, it moved very close to the sitter on my right. At each pass the trumpet would whack him on the head, but then stopped and began thumping him over and over on the top of his head, and then went for his face. While he wasn't hurt, his laughter started sounding a little nervous, maybe wondering if an eye was going to get poked out. Then the trumpet turned on me in a way I can only describe as "giving me what-for," then stopped for a few seconds and proceeded to do the same to the sitter on my left.

After giving her a talking-to for a few seconds it then returned to me with its mission of madness. It began smacking me back and forth across the face, over and over. I thought I was going to fall on the floor from laughing so hard, but I couldn't break the hand chain to defend myself. Just when I thought it was starting to go too far, the trumpet slowly and carefully descended onto my lap, where it continued to innocently rest until J.A. asked for it so she could put it aside in readiness for the final experiments. I could only think it had to be another sign from Tim.

Final Experiments #7 & 8—Cassadaga—Ectoplasm & Photography, August 15

(Note: "EP" = ectoplasm.) Hans advised that the Chemists were almost ready to bring the "ectoplasmic artifact into the informational matrix of the Force Field" for viewing under red light. He seemed to be buying time for them by launching into one of his many lectures—this one about EP—

while warning that we might hear unpleasant sounds coming from the Medium as the ectoplasm emerged. He explained that the Medium's large body would be difficult for them to control. He cautioned that we may hear noises like static coming from the cabinet—which by now was completely closed—but not to worry.

Those of us closest to the cabinet did indeed hear crackling and popping noises from within the cabinet, which quickly subsided into a brief silence. Then the Medium could be heard as if his breathing was obstructed, and then gagging, which would have been the EP emerging and solidifying from the roof of his mouth, from where it is believed to emerge. Hans was able to tell J.A. to ready the red light, and she asked him which one—the flashlight or the dimmer? He ok'd the dimmer and said to have the flashlight ready. It was clear that very little time was available and everything had to happen quickly and just right. Hans told J.A. to turn on the red light, "very low at first."

When the curtains were briefly opened by the Circle Controls on the left and right side, the Medium's face was seen to be covered in some kind of white webby substance, which I recognized as EP. Before J.A. could raise the level of light, Hans stamped the Medium's feet and the curtains were closed. The Medium's labored breathing was uncomfortably audible, and then Hans ordered the curtains to open again. The red light was allowed to be raised a bit brighter, and the Medium's hands were seen to be pulling the EP from the mouth. There was a large quantity of the silky-looking stuff falling down his chest and onto his lap. J.A. was allowed to briefly shine the more focused red flashlight on the EP, which reacted by pulling away and also as if melting. The feet stamped, and the curtains closed again.

When the curtains were opened again, the EP had formed a tent of gossamer around the Medium by attaching itself to the sides and top of the cabinet. Hans demonstrated how it could be carefully pulled off and gathered in the Medium's



hands, looking like cotton candy that sparkled.

The brief exposure of the EP to red light continued. Each time the cabinet curtains were opened the amount of EP on the floor between the Medium's legs had increased and was also seen to be pulsating—at first as a formless blob that was more solid, and then we watched as it rose into a bumpy columnar form, from where emerged the clear shape of a hand which flexed its fingers before sinking back into the floor. From my position it did not appear as a fully-formed hand but was rather cartoonish-like. From previous experience I knew that given time and proper force it could eventually manifest as a perfectly realistic human hand.

Hans announced that they had one of the Visitors there and were going to try to present their face in the EP. When the curtains were opened, it was seen that the EP had formed into a large mass, completely hiding the Medium behind it. The mass was pulling together into a funnel shape, and moving like a slow motion tornado. As the funnel turned I could see very small circular shapes in it that reminded me of sunspots.

One of the shapes loomed up front and center, stabilized and then grew larger and more oval in shape. As its size increased Hans cried out rather urgently that everyone look hard and quickly as there wasn't much time. If one of us did not claim it the connection would be lost. My friend Jack haltingly wondered aloud that it might be a friend of his, but then we both simultaneously recognized it as his grandmother, who had transitioned a few years ago at the age of 102. We both agreed that she appeared much younger as in older photos. As soon as he claimed her, the shape swelled even larger, then pushed outward in a 3D shape; her eyes and mouth were even opening and closing. Only 30 seconds had passed by, and then the tornado movement resumed and the face was retracted back into the EP. Feet were stamped, and the curtains closed. Jack later shared that the transition date of his father happened to be that very same

day.

Hans suddenly announced that issues had arisen regarding the returning of certain energies back to the Medium, because the ectoplasm had picked up an appreciable amount of dirt from the floor. He chastised everyone in general about the importance of cleanliness for the health of the Medium. The Medium was beginning to return to consciousness, and so the experiment had gone as far as possible for the evening.

August 17

The evening proceeded with nearly the same amount of great success as on August 15. The EP manifestations were especially spectacular, as were Shannon's photographs in red light. When the EP rose into the funnel-like structure that appeared in shape and movement like a small tornado moving in slow motion, I quickly counted at least 20 small oval shapes that contained images of people's faces. Either this meant that we had many more Visitors than we realized who wanted to present themselves, or perhaps the EP was mirroring the mental images of the sitters who were thinking of loved ones in some way, or both. As before, one of the medallions stopped when facing front and center, and then began to grow. As it enlarged it swelled into a 3D form, which was clearly an actual physical face and not a flat photo of one. As before, Hans called out with urgency that someone must claim it quickly or else it would remain unconnected and then be lost.

Sharon Pieri, who is a very experienced medium, claimed it as her Uncle John. Like the other faces, Uncle John looked "old fashioned" and much like how people appeared in tin-types and cabinet photos from an earlier century. Sharon related later that she was startled by how young he looked, as she had only known him as an older man with salt and pepper hair—whereas at the sitting he appeared to be a vigorous individual in his 40s. She showed Shannon's photo of it to some

family members who promptly verified it as the John they once knew.

The Wizdom

Following are only a very few of the many things Hans said during the séances I attended, as well as what others shared with me from the same and other sittings. Much of it was too weighty or weird to retain. There was so much going on that focusing on one thing meant one might miss something else. I'm certain many of us experienced something I call "psychospiritual amnesia" which often arises when confronted by the numinous.

What I personally recognized is that Hans and the Chemists are people who were once like us, and still are in some but not all ways. They clearly possess far more information and technology, but that does not necessarily or automatically make them superior in all wisdom. Rather like the fact that there is a lot of remarkable information on the Internet, but also a profusion of misinformation. How do you tell one from the other?

Hans shared he was not very proficient in English on Earth—and still is not—therefore he relies on the Medium's mind and memory for the language he needs to speak to the sitters. Although the Medium's English is very good, those who know German will understand that certain concepts and ideas between the two languages are nearly or completely untranslatable. Please keep this in mind when wondering why certain words were used that seem odd, such as "alien" and "side-effect." I was particularly struck by the use of "side-effect," which Tim also used in our book when sharing about spirit technology.

For the most part, I am combining a few direct quotes with some paraphrased material. To avoid giving the impression that what was heard by this particular Spirit should be at once fully accepted without some committed thinking—and tempered by reason and a sense of humor—I will characterize it as something slightly different than con-

ventional earthly insight and dub it "wizdom."

"You on Earth are projections from a higher into a lower dimension; you don't usually realize this consciously. We (meaning Spirit) consciously exist in an informational dimension. We are of the informational."

"The ectoplasm and other manifestations are side-effects rather than actual sought-for results of our experiments. We utilize and exploit these side-effects in certain ways." (Does this imply we are not able to see the real results on Spirit's side? The chemists see the real results, while we witness the side-effects?)

"Ectoplasm can be used as an information-receiving device, into which we send information which causes it to mirror things such as your thoughts, emotions, and memories, which then help us build the forms."

"The hand has been used since ancient times in physical mediumship. It is the archetypal symbol of what it means to be human; the symbol of having creative consciousness. Without your hands you would not be human; you build and also destroy with them. We build the hand to show you that we are like you. We also build, and we also had hands just like yours."

"Consciousness is the singular thing that makes humankind what it is. There was a time when humankind was not conscious. Many, many ages ago aliens from another dimension caused humankind to evolve to self-awareness, to self-consciousness by enhancing your DNA and then establishing a social order on earth that was based upon classless or egalitarian principles. Great hope for you was created. But later another alien race arrived to displace the first group's work by establishing another social order based on kings, bloodlines and materialism. As a result humankind lost their original



abilities and capacity for pure spiritual living, of pure spiritual perception. Humankind became too entranced by the effects of status to the point of no longer being able to comprehend original divine cause.”

“We have only a very brief window of time to open the force field and achieve the matrix of ectoplasmic energy. There are often visitors who have been made aware of what we are doing, and so come to try to make themselves known to you by stepping into the force field—so to speak—and causing you to feel their touch. We believe that because they are so unfamiliar with moving about in your material world, their touches may feel a little clumsy or bumpy at first, but they quickly regain a sense of balance. Nevertheless do not fear, for nobody will ever get hurt.”

“We (the Chemists) believe that our work could be instrumental in the redevelopment of humankind, for we are following a long tradition that began as a response to humankind’s great loss of spiritual capabilities. There have been many Spirit attempts to achieve the great vision of your return to spiritual awareness—but for the most part these attempts have failed. Your blind fascination with things, continually being mesmerized by them and compulsively driven to accumulate things at any and all costs has kept Spirit’s efforts at bay, while imprisoning you and injuring the Earth.”

“Humankind is currently living out of balance with nature and because of this there will be consequences.”

The following delivered with a very stern tone:

“We in Spirit, who not only freely give you any and all information within our reach, do not and will not suppress or censor your openness to new and wonderful things. You must become aware of the damage of the dogma from spiritual groups who work to control not only you, but of how they

deem what is acceptable information, while allowing you to receive only certain information. I also say this to you about those forms of mediumship that not only outrightly reject other forms but even forbid it, and then forbid you to question their orders.”

“All dimensions are in the same location—this is the ultimate Act of Love. So upon transition one is instantly reunited with those on Earth, who don’t see this. They are literally blinded by their grief. We want them to open their eyes and see that we live, and that we live more than ever!”

“When you grieve you cause your loved ones pain. They suffer from your grief. So you must work very hard to transform your suffering into being happy for them.”

“Love can be used destructively as well as constructively. Use your love to leave the grief, for the grief is destructive. It does not help your loved ones, but hurts them deeply. You must become filled with joy for them—it is the right way.”

“We do not wish to invalidate your very real and painful grief process, but it should not go on for months or years, for this is not good for you or for your loved ones—use your love to leave the grief.”

“Do not let yourself be dominated by fear, but be filled with joy and awe.”

“All of us are All-One, which is the end result of the ultimate act of love.”

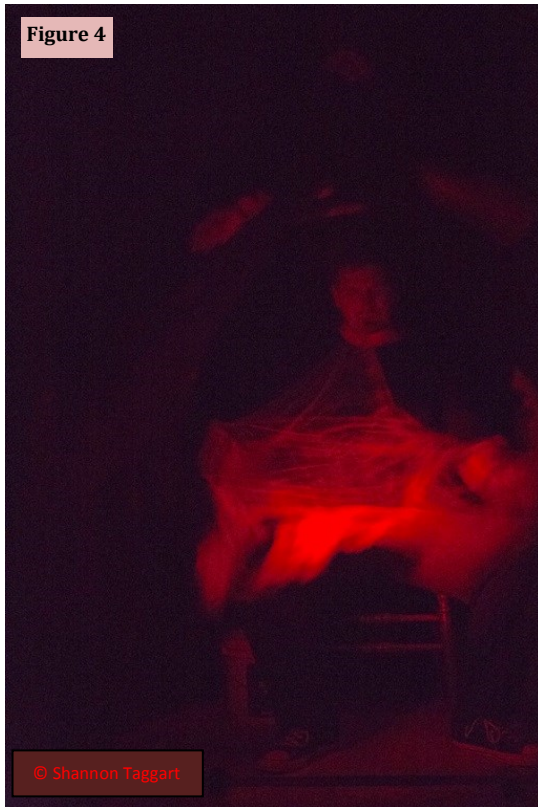
The Images

[Photo sequence here not in strict sequential order, unless otherwise indicated. All red-light ectoplasmic images in this report © Shannon Taggart.]

Figure 3 – The séance room at Cassadaga – note cabinet decorated with the ceremonial flags of the Lakota Yuwipi Tradition. Photo by K.M.. (See also Figure 1 for details)



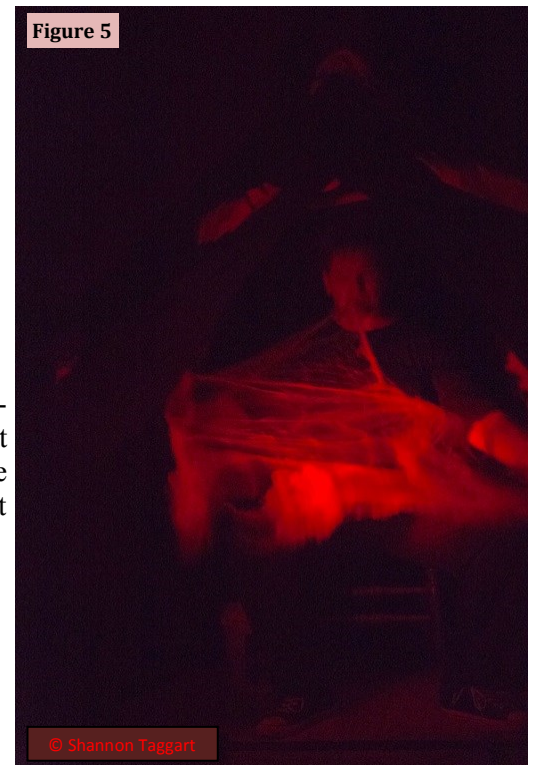
Figure 4



© Shannon Taggart

Figure 4 shows the entranced medium in his chair. To the left and right can be seen the edges of the curtain being held open by the Circle Controls. The white glowing mass is the ectoplasm—hereafter to be referred to as “EP.” The gossamer-like substance is still extruding from the medium’s mouth while his hands, which were resting on his legs, are beginning to move upward. Already the EP is spreading out into a more defined structure. Keep in mind that sitters were able to view the scene for only 5 to 10 seconds. The hypersensitivity of the EP to any light rendered it volatile and caused it to disintegrate quickly, and so the curtains had to close quickly in response to the foot stamps of Hans.

Figure 5



© Shannon Taggart

The exposure seen in **Figure 5** was taken perhaps 30 seconds after the Figure 4 image. Hans is using the medium’s hands to gently pull the EP apart to show the sitters the outer and inner structure of the substance. The blurred edges of the EP, as it advances over the medium’s lap, reveal how it is manifesting in a rapidly-moving fog or mist form.

Figure 6 shows the EP to continue to extrude from the medium's mouth, as Hans is able to reveal more of the early structure, which at this point resembles a very beautiful spider's web.

The appearance of the EP seemed to vary across its surface, perhaps due to its constant movement as it shifted. In certain places it seemed to sparkle and reflect light, while in other areas it gave off a dull sheen. Although one can see gaps from the EP being pulled apart, they didn't remain as such for long, filling back in as quickly as they appeared. At one instant the EP would look like cotton candy, and then change to something similar to fiberglass insulation as it pulled back together.

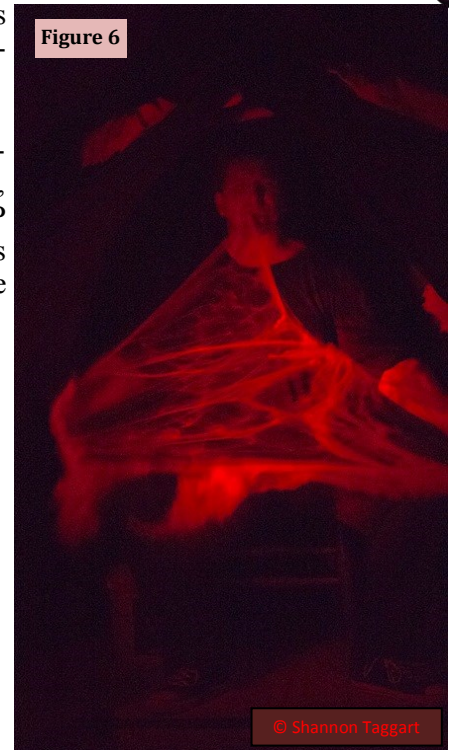


Figure 7 was taken perhaps three minutes after Figure 6, and shows that the spaces in the EP that were there a minute before have filled in, giving it the appearance of a sheet of very fine, translucent silk.

Hans continues to use the medium's hands to show the sitters more of the structural details of the EP by gently teasing it apart. At the center bottom edge of the web can be seen a bit of a triangular-shaped blur. This is the EP continuing to flow out and down, manifesting differently than the webbing and appearing as a kind of cloudy mist or fog. It is also extending over the medium's right knee as it courses towards the floor.

Dim red light and the small red flashlight were used here. The flashlight's movements are evidenced by the yellowish arcs on the EP's surface, caused by the focused light that gathers at the bulb's tip. This focused light obviously had a direct effect on the reactive EP, which behaved as withdrawing from it, and at some areas seemed to melt. It appears that at this point medium's right foot is about to be stamped to signal the curtains to close or is actually signaling.

Figure 8, taken at the beginning of the experiment, clearly shows the EP behaving as if exploring the inner space of the cabinet, and then affixing itself to the top and sides to form a tent around the medium. At the lower far left and far right certain portions of the EP are extending as simple cloud-like "appendages" that are advancing through the space, traveling further downward. The medium's hands are passively raised, not yet engaged with deliberate manipulation of the EP. This photo was taken in dim red light and red flashlight. The bright yellow light at the bottom portion of the EP is believed to show movement from the red flash-light's more focused concentration of light at thinner tip of the bulb, which J.A., was carefully using as directed by Hans.



Figure 9. Hans has moved the medium in his chair slightly forward from out of the cabinet; the taped boundary line can be seen just in front. This boundary was never crossed by the medium during the entire séance at any sitting. Here the EP has released itself from the sides of the cabinet and is now moving onto the floor. Its lower portions are obscured by the red flashlight's yellowish light, and were actually seen to retreat from the intense concentration. The medium's hands remain passive while the EP moves down to begin compacting for the manifestation of a spirit hand.

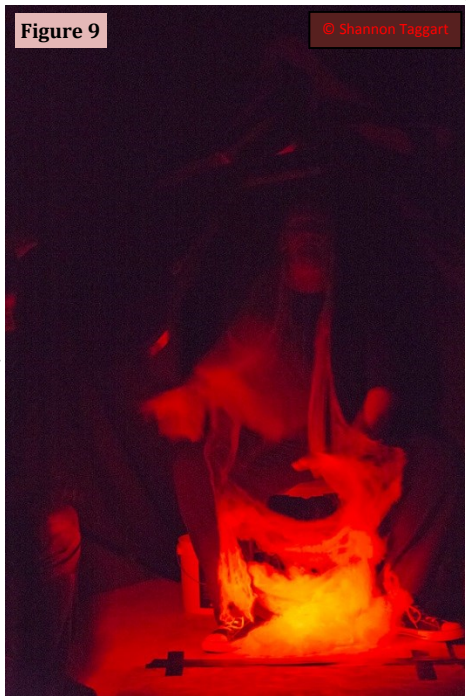


Figure 10. An excellent view of the cabinet, medium and sitters. Note how the sitters are quietly showing their open curiosity without fear or nervousness, as they try to get a good look at the EP without venturing too far into the force field.

The EP has coalesced into a frothing mist on the floor between the medium's feet, to begin forming the hand which can be seen happening just next to the medium's left foot (see white arrow). The hand was moving slightly back and forth as it emerged, which caused the blurring in the photo.

Although the medium seems to be also looking at the EP, he is not, but is still extruding EP which is in an invisible gaseous state. The medium is completely dissociated from the body and neither sees nor hears any of what goes on. He must rely on participating second-hand via the occasional recording allowed by the chemists. Movements of the red flashlight in J.A.'s hand are seen in the yellow arcs on her lap to the left of the photo.

Figure 11 is from the beginning of one of the séances, showing the start of the EP emerging from the medium's mouth, as well as its venturing to the back of the cabinet behind the medium as it seeks purchase on the curtains.

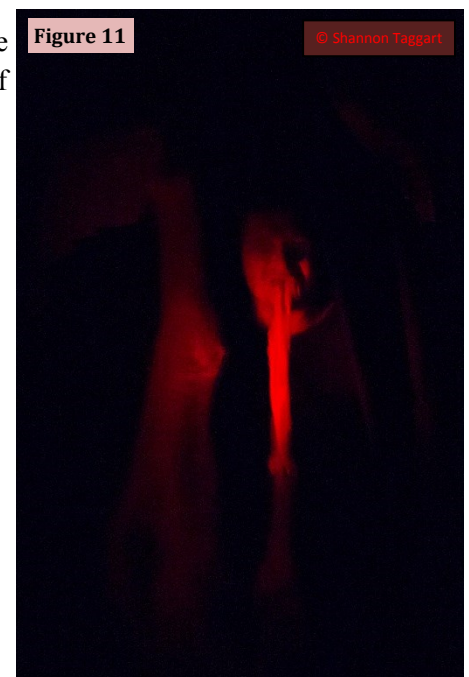


Figure 12

© Shannon Taggart



Figure 12. A breathtaking image of “Uncle John” – a relative of one of the sitters who came as a Visitor to try to make his presence known. It started out as a small oval of about 1 inch, and then in 2–3 seconds grew to the size seen here, about 6 inches in diameter. The image then emerged as a 3D face. I was close enough to see hair texture and lines in the forehead—which moved, as did the eyebrows, eyes and mouth. The EP appears to be making a “cocoon” around it, as if swaddling it for protection. An arc of yellow from the flashlight obscures part of the chin.

Figure 13

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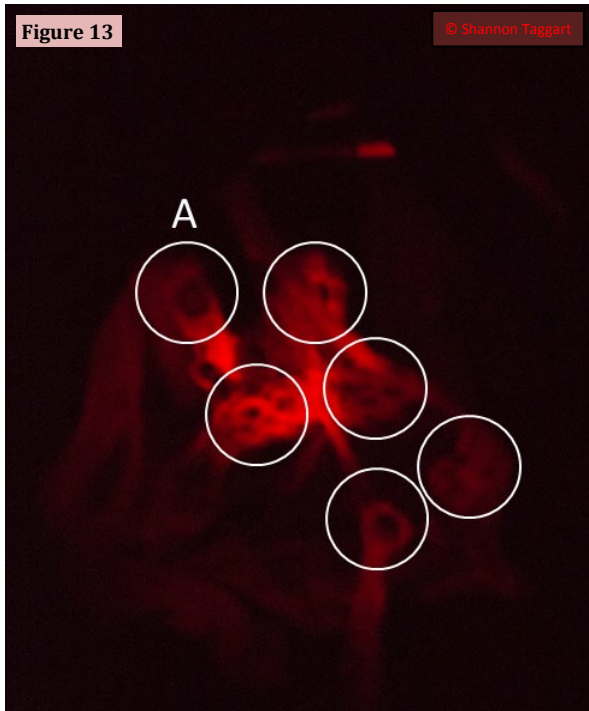


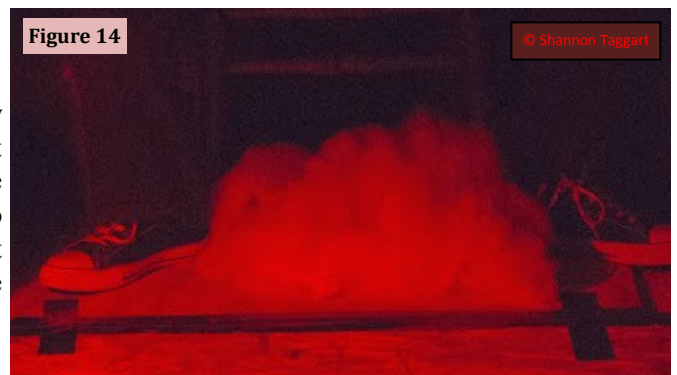
Figure 13 is presented to show what occurred before Uncle John’s fuller appearance in Figure 12. “A” is Uncle John. The EP had formed into what was earlier described as “a slow-motion tornado” swirling around, each turn revealing more small oval shapes—at least 15 can be seen here, but there were many more. Each was an actual face either in potential or actual formation. As I understand Hans’ attempts to explain EP, only a few—maybe 2 or 3—were images of actual Visitors who had come to the sitting. The others are all virtual reflections of the sitters’ thoughts and memories of loved ones they hoped would be there, which are then “mirrored as information” by the EP.

Finally at one point the EP suddenly stopped and the medallion containing Uncle John’s image move front and center, enlarging up and out. The other ovals disappeared back into the EP. This was in response to the actual presence of Uncle John, as the EP took information directly from him to “in-form” the form. It was crucial for the experiment that someone recognize and claim the one that emerged. This would then establish a psychic and emotional link between the three: sitter, Visitor and EP, thus establishing a flow of vital energy that would enliven the form for a few seconds.

Figure 14. This photo clearly shows the EP cloud roiling away as it gathers force to attempt to manifest a spirit hand. Some of it can be seen edging a bit over the taped boundary, although the medium’s feet always stayed well behind it. The EP appears to have assumed its position independently from the medium, but part is still in an invisible gaseous form and connected to the medium.

Figure 14

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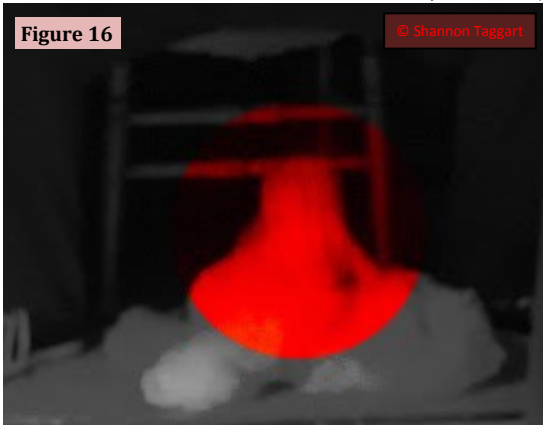


Figure 16

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Figure 16 is a close-up of the hand form building up from the EP cloud. One can see what might be fingers but wondering why they're so hard to make out. It helps to understand that the EP was never stationary while the hand was emerging. Both EP and the fingers were moving about—undulating, surging, contracting and expanding. Note the puffy formations at the base—these were also in constant motion. On very rare occasions the EP has been able to withstand the red light long enough to be seen to slow down and stabilize, and the hand then also steadies into a form practically indistinguishable from a human hand in size, detail and movement.

Summation

I thank you for staying with me until the end—it's been quite an expedition. We have certainly seen and read enough of a lot of *somethings*. It is clear and unclear that there is so much complexity and so few ways of putting it into words that you are probably feeling—like me—a bit exhausted, befuddled and cranky. It's been like finding an important message in an unfamiliar language in a bottle that floated in on an unnamed sea. Much of it is not only untranslatable, it is doubtful most of it ever even made it from the outer reaches of an unobstructed universe to our realm of the obstructed. Perhaps the very clogged and clanging nature of our geography is the reason we are so thwarted in our attempts to get past the sprinkles of funny fireflies and insistent rappings in the dark.

*The version of this account is abridged; to read the full article, please visit http://www.spiritarchive.org/uploads/1/2/4/7/12470836/august_goforth_-_water_under_the_rocks_-_a_firsthand_account_of_the_historical_u.s._visit_of_feg...2013-30pp-rv.pdf

Biography

August Goforth, a licensed psychotherapist in private practice in New York City, is also a spirit medium. Because he does not normally utilize his mediumistic abilities for therapy sessions or provide public mediumship readings, he has adopted this pseudonym for professional confidentiality and personal privacy interests. He does offer private guidance and counseling for mediums and those in development. August is globally but quietly known in various physical mediumistic communities for his scholarly interest and investigative participation as a clairvoyant, clairsentient, and physical medium. He is a co-author of *The Risen: Dialogues of Love, Grief, & Survival Beyond Death—21st Century Reports from the Afterlife Through Contemplative, Intuitive, & Physical Mediumship* (2009).

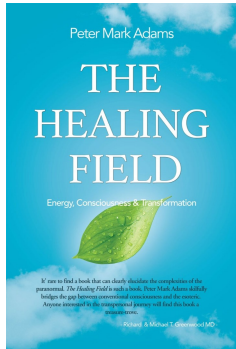
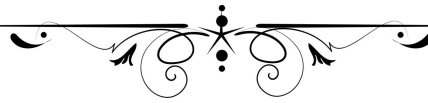
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Book Review

The Healing Field: Energy, Consciousness and Transformation

Erika A. Pratte

**Title:** The Healing Field**Author:** Peter Mark Adams**ISBN:** 978-1-4525-8356-3**Publisher:** Balboa Press**Price:** \$13.99

Reading Peter Mark Adams' *The Healing Field* is rather like a transpersonal experience itself. Adams is unabashedly eclectic in his approach to elucidating the intricacies of the transpersonal journey; pulling from various traditions of psychology, religious and spiritual practices, philosophy and cultural backgrounds, the work has a noetic quality and unifies opposites. It is very easy (at least it was for me, personally) to identify with much of the work, the anecdotes and scholarly background research alike. Chapter 7, "Healing through Spirit" was of particular interest. I found myself saying, "Yes! That's me!" or "I completely get that!" all throughout the chapter, as I study psychotherapy, with particular emphasis in humanistic and transpersonal orientations, and have had quite a few transpersonal experiences in my own life.

Other chapters in *The Healing Field* include – Chapter 1, Healing Energy and Consciousness; Chapter 2, Psi and Intuitive Knowledge; Chapter 3, Healing Issues within Our Time-line; Chapter 4, Healing Issues beyond Our Time-line; Chapter 5, The Healing Field; Chapter 6, Healing on Extended Planes; Chapter 7 (already mentioned), Healing through Spirit; Chapter 8, Conclusions.

The book obviously covers a large range of topics, including ESP, peak experiences, energy healing, extended planes of existence, and past life traumas. Although there are many statements made regarding these topics and the fact that many of these topics fall into realms outside of our current mainstream science modalities and even parapsychology, the reader needs to remember the context of the statements made: most of what is covered and the theories behind them are based on anecdotes, spiritual traditions, and esoteric philosophies. If one is reading this book for harder facts grounded in experimented theories, then of course he's not going to appreciate it. If the reader takes the book for what it is and is seeking more information on the transpersonal, particularly for personal reasons, then the reader is keeping it in its context and will get something out of it.

While largely accessible, some aspects of *The Healing Field* may be confusing to some not well acquainted with aspects or even all of the subject areas that the work addresses. Adams introduces many areas and pulls from many sources in a short amount of time. Prior knowledge and a firm foundation in psychical research (or at least, paranormal investigation), transpersonal psychology, Eastern philosophy, and energy work are definitely helpful to have when reading this book. It can be a little chaotic at times trying to sew together all of the different threads in this book. One comes across many key terms in this book like paranormal, parapsychology, spirituality, consciousness, philosophy, science and research.

None of these are the same as the other, and because they are presented in the same place (the book) and also because it's never quite stated what the author

considers, for instance, science vs. philosophy, spirituality vs. transpersonal psychology, paranormal interest vs. parapsychology, it is very easy to overlook where areas that are similar to one another have distinct differences, and thus it is easy for a novice to not think that there are differences to appreciate.

However, *The Healing Field* could easily be a book that “wets one’s whistle” to energy healing work and those looking for spiritual and eclectic self healing work. Those who appreciate reading a book that resonates with the reader on a personal level and inspires curiosity through anecdotes spiced with background research will definitely appreciate Peter Mark Adams’ *The Healing Field*.



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Check out the 11th volume of the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health's *Grenzüberschreitungen* (Crossing Borders) series, *Experimentelle Parapsychologie*, brought to you by Dr. Stefan Schmidt. Eleven scientists explain the basics of the natural science-oriented approach, provide their own current research projects and related controversial scientific positions with respect to the experimental investigation of the extraordinary.

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Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology

Some Thoughts on the 2014 Parapsychological Convention



Erika A. Pratte

There are a few must-go-to parapsychology related events, and the Parapsychological Association's annual convention is definitely one of them. This year's gathering was held August 14 – 17, in Concord, California (about an hour outside of San Francisco); a prime location for many of the “big name” locals. Stanley Krippner, Charley Tart, Loyd Auerbach (Arrangements Chair) and Dean Radin (Program Chair) were in attendance, to name a few.

As a novice researcher in the field and having known about the PA Convention for almost 10 years, I was naturally and undeniably excited to be an attendee and to be the recipient of the Robert L. Morris Student Travel Fund. I also interviewed a handful of parapsychology researchers and clinicians for the PA's new YouTube channel, presented a poster on JEEP and promoted the journal. The PA and its yearly convention attract researchers with a variety of interests and backgrounds, as well as enthusiasts who are just as diverse. This variety was apparent at the convention and made for one enlightening and fun experience.

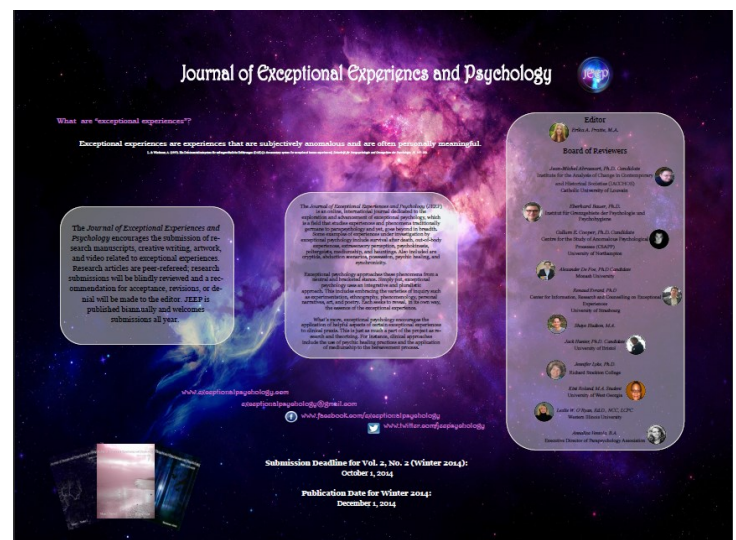
I have been reading the work of many of the researchers I met at the convention and actually shaking hands, sitting down with them and talking is a different sort of education from them. You not only learn about whom they are as researchers but get a glimpse of who they are as people. For instance, when I met with Stanley Krippner, I discovered that his favorite opera is the same as mine (Carmen), and that the jacket I complimented him on was previously owned by Rollo May.

Gatherings like the PA Convention are where researchers and enthusiasts not only join forces to update and educate, but also to celebrate. There was much talk about how great it was to see avid researchers who have been active in the field

for a while, but also fresh faces and some of the up and coming generation of researchers. In such a small field, you could expect people to be greedy with research and resources but there was overwhelming support and gratitude apparent all around at the convention. Sometimes, because we are in a “minority” field, it is easy to feel the burden of non-acceptance and want to pursue something “mainstream,” but going to the PA Convention was a reminder for me why I am in this field. We are a passionate group with humble origins and one that perseveres because we support one another.

The next Parapsychological Association convention will be held in London, England at the University of Greenwich, July 16 – 19, 2015. For more information, please visit the PA's website www.parapsych.org. To check out the PA's new YouTube channel, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX3uEicD9xbMksiD-V7I7zw/videos>.

A small picture of JEEP's PA Convention poster



*To view the enlarged version, please visit JEEP's Facebook page

www.facebook.com/exceptionalpsychology

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