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BOOK REVIEWS

Selling Sickness by Ray Moynihan and Alan Cassels. Nation Books, 2005 (first published by Allen & Unwin, Australia). 272 pp. $16.95 (paperback). ISBN 9781560258568.

Everyone should read this book; and everyone should get very angry as they read. I became so angry that several times I had to put the book aside for a while.

Scientific explorers are, of course, familiar with the fact that mainstream institutions persistently and forcibly resist acknowledging their mistakes and misdeeds. But *Selling Sickness* describes and documents example after example where the misdeeds are in plain view, including to the regulators who are supposed to prevent or punish them, while the corruption and the exploitation not only continue, they actually grow worse. Thus a pharmaceutical marketing specialist puts in writing that Lilly's renaming of Prozac as Sarafem and producing it in lavender and pink is a fine example of "fostering the creation of a condition [premenstrual dysphoric disorder] and aligning it with a product". Perhaps even worse are the cited examples of drug companies fudging and misreporting the results of clinical trials, for example about the increase in potentially suicidal behavior by adolescents administered Paxil, a drug that has the additional disadvantage of serious withdrawal symptoms.

The basic story is how drug companies have generated business by inventing new diseases. They employ public relations (PR) firms to convince the public that the new sicknesses exist. They distort data, and they use many devices to corrupt regulators, researchers, and practicing physicians.

Anger is no-how lessened by the fact that this is not a matter of conspiracy, just the actions of ordinary people embedded in an economic system of free marketing without the benefit of any hand, invisible or visible, to declare some things out of order. That permits countless people to live by the Charlie Wilson fallacy (Wilson, 1952), deluding themselves that by doing their best for themselves and for their employer they are doing good for everyone.

Inventing diseases? More precisely, designating as diseases conditions or circumstances that are perfectly natural and normal accompaniments of life.

As human beings age, a number of things happen quite naturally ***and inevitably***: blood pressure tends to increase as arteries become less flexible; levels of cholesterol increase (for the excellent reason that it is beneficial—on average, higher cholesterol levels correspond with longer lifespans); libido

decreases and levels of sex hormones change in a similar direction; women experience menopause, with accompanying physiological changes; bones become weaker and more brittle as they lose density.

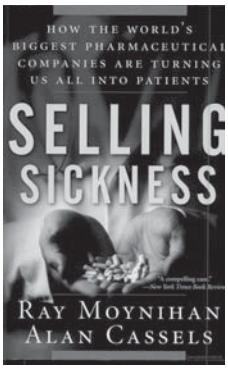
Now, these changes are naturally correlated with other things that correlate with aging: increased frequency of heart attacks and strokes; decreased interest in sexual intercourse; increasing frequency of bone fractures.

But, ***of course***, correlation never proves causation. It has never been shown that high blood pressure ***causes*** heart attacks or strokes, no matter how plausible such a mechanism might seem a priori; it has never been shown that high levels of cholesterol ***cause*** heart disease, and it has never been shown that artificially lowering levels of cholesterol decreases the risk of heart disease.

Nevertheless, the pharmaceutical industry has succeeded in labeling natural processes as medical conditions warranting treatment. The whole society, not just the drug companies, have abetted this by swallowing the equating of "risk factors" with "risk", committing the fallacy of interpreting correlations as causes. In the United States and New Zealand, the wider society has also abetted its own exploitation by allowing drug companies to advertise their wares direct to the public, so that doctors are inundated with patients asking them whether the wonder drugs that preserve eternal youth are "right for them". This has been permitted since the 1990s in the USA, when also a director of the National Institutes of Health started to allow his senior staff to accept large payments as consultants for drug companies, even when the officials were supposed to supervise approval of the company's drugs.

This book gives copious examples, but it fails to make the essential general point that "risk factor" means no more than *correlation*, and that lowering the level of a risk factor may have no beneficial effect whatsoever (though the book does state this specifically in the case of cholesterol). In considering high blood pressure, the book actually commits the error of confusing correlation with causation by saying that "it is one factor that can raise" the risk. "Risk factors" are analogous to "surrogate markers", which are increasingly used in the absence of evidence that they actually measure clinical condition; thus "AIDS" patients are monitored by CD4 counts and viral load, despite the ample evidence published in mainstream peer-reviewed literature that the one doesn't correlate with the other and that neither correlates with clinical prognosis.

The book does, however, point out appropriately that risks from side effects should always be weighed against the possible benefits of the drugs, something that the propaganda from Big Pharma strives to obscure. One pervasive theme is that certain drugs that may benefit a small number of genuinely ill people are marketed to anyone who has any symptoms that might somehow be said to come under the rubric of something that requires treatment. Thus a dangerously toxic drug, Lotronex, is urged on "up to 20%"



of the population by perverting poll results to interpret any instance of constipation or diarrhea or intestinal discomfort as "possibly a dangerous condition—irritable bowel syndrome—ask your doctor"; or by taking any instance of not feeling like having sex as indicating FSD, female sexual dysfunction, which through misinterpretation of a survey can then be said to affect 43% of women!! To be able with a straight, even solemn face to market anything as dysfunctional when nearly half of all women are alleged to have it is quite a compliment to the wiles of the PR gurus, as well as further confirmation that the drug companies think of profits first, foremost, and last. Of course, numerically speaking, that is small potatoes compared with the fact that up to 90% of senior citizens are eligible for treatment for "high blood pressure"!

Perhaps the most serious consequence of the adverse side effects of drugs is that there is no system for bringing those to official attention once a drug has been approved. Individual doctors can, but are not required to, report such incidents; and drug companies are supposed to, but there is no requirement for doctors or hospitals to report such incidents to drug companies; which means that even when manufacturers receive such reports, they can play down their significance as not being representative, only suspected, and so on. According to Moynihan and Cassels, "only a tiny proportion of serious complications are ever reported to the FDA [Food and Drug Administration]".

Another way of selling more drugs is to invent not only a condition but a precursor to a condition: For those whose blood pressure is not yet classed as "high", the drug companies have invented the condition of "prehypertension", which of course implies that by starting treatment ***now***, one can avoid actually developing hypertension—when in reality the only way to prevent one's blood pressure getting higher is to die. The increase in to-be-medically-treated conditions has occurred not only with plainly and solely physical matters but also with psychiatric "disorders", shown by the morphing of the *DSM*, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, from "a slim volume" to "a massive tome". Increased testing is another path to more prescribing of drugs, so Merck subsidized the distribution of "bone density testing machines" as a way to enhance sales of its Fosamax—even though clinical trials indicated that these tests are not good predictors of bone fractures, the risk of which is the very reason for resorting to Fosamax. A common tactic is to carry out a trial on individuals at high risk of some sort, find some benefit from a medication, and then market the medication as beneficial also for individuals who are only at low risk. The book claims that the biotech and drug industries are already "gearing

up to promote widespread genetic testing", since that will open opportunities to market possible remedies for hereditary ailments.

Other general points illustrated in various examples are that the side effects of some drugs actually cause the very symptoms they are supposed to treat (the anti-HIV drug AZT, and many other "antiretrovirals", are cases in point); that advisory panels are replete with conflicts of interest; and that they keep raising bars as to what is defined as healthy—"desirable" levels of cholesterol and blood pressure keep being reduced so that increasing numbers of people are fed the respective drugs. Statistical sleight of hand is illustrated in several instances by showing how a very small reduction in ***absolute*** risk can be trumpeted as a breakthrough because a reduction from 2 per hundred to 1 per hundred can be described as a 50% reduction—true but misleading. Also nicely illustrated is how one can get the desired answer by phrasing a question in a particular way, as pollsters for political parties and PR shills for drug companies well know.

Drug companies fund research, pay researchers and doctors as "consultants", "lecturers", etc., and pay for conferences and attendant perks. They carry out the clinical trials on whose basis drugs are approved, with no requirement that the results of ***all*** trials be revealed. Drug companies pay medical journals to publish "supplements" containing material solicited or written by the companies themselves. The drug companies set up fake "grassroots" organizations masquerading as ordinary people concerned about irritable bowel syndrome and other to-be-sold ailments, so common a practice that it has a name, "astroturfing"; which might also describe the practice of hiring celebrities to offer fake testimonials—a survey is cited to the effect that 2/3 of all health charities and patient advocacy groups in Britain are funded by drug companies. In popular articles, celebrities can be cited as making claims that drug companies would never be permitted to make in advertisements. (Forty years on, I still recall with pleasure when my under-teenaged daughter had as a homework assignment to describe what she most liked and most disliked, and why; and her insight for the latter was, "Famous people telling lies on TV". Would that the adult population were as perceptive.)

Another pervasive problem is that clinical trials that fail to support pharmaceutical claims are not continually pressed on the public, so that misleading propaganda exerts hegemony. For instance, the earliest full test of AZT as treatment against AIDS did not yield grounds for using it, but that was ignored (Farber, 1993). Hormone replacement therapy continued to be recommended by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists even after a large trial had shown increased risks of heart attacks. Newer and more expensive drugs are touted against older, better tested, cheaper remedies with fewer side effects.

These are the "sicknesses" discussed in this book that we've been

successfully sold as medical conditions requiring treatment with drugs: high cholesterol; depression (the medications are barely better than placebo, however); menopause; attention deficit disorder; high blood pressure; premenstrual dysphoric disorder; social anxiety disorder; osteoporosis; irritable bowel syndrome; female sexual dysfunction.

Quite chastening is the fact that the strategies and tactics of the pharmaceutical industry are not only acknowledged, they are described in detail in publicly available documents, and successes are openly boasted about. The dangers to public health are underscored by the emphasis on selling drugs that supposedly treat chronic conditions and need to be taken lifelong; in that vein, it was even recommended that screening for high blood-pressure begin at age 3. The aim of lifelong drug intake is illustrated by the industry's use of the term "lifestyle drug" and its ambition to market "treatments" for such "illnesses" as obesity, smoking, hair loss, skin aging, and sexual dysfunction, in order supposedly to "optimize quality of life". The opportunity to market such interventions is assisted by the lack of any good way to even define the parameters of such things as obesity or female sexual dysfunction, making it rather easy to claim the effectiveness of treatments on the basis of personal anecdotes.

The book also illustrates that no one, no matter how skeptical, can possibly enquire into all the assertions made by mainstream organizations. Thus the present authors criticize preoccupation with such matters as attention deficit disorder "in the era of the global AIDS crisis", a "crisis" just as much manufactured by interested parties as any of the examples given in the book. Another criticism is that the authors seem to misunderstand that conflicts of interest ***always*** have bad consequences when they describe them as "The problem is one of perception"; though the book does give some cogent examples of improper interactions among regulators, industry representatives, researchers, and medical practitioners.

I certainly recommend this book, indeed insist that it should be read by everyone. If anything it tends to try to be more fair to the pharmaceutical industries than the evidence seems to warrant. It is worth pondering, too, that the five-page Epilogue, "What can we do?", conveys the uncomfortable feeling that no way of fixing the problems seems to be in sight or even in imagination.

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Wilson, C. (1952). United States Senate Armed Services Committee hearings on nomination of Charles E. Wilson for Secretary of Defense. "For years I thought that what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice versa"; usually misquoted as "What's good for General Motors is good for the country."

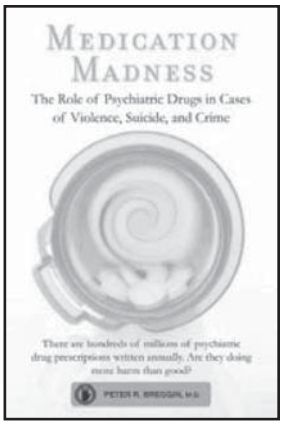
Medication Madness: The Role of Psychiatric Drugs in Cases of Violence, Suicide, and Crime by Peter R. Breggin, M.D. St. Martin's Griffin, 2009. 400 pp. $17.95 (paperback). ISBN 9780312565503.

Medication Madness' strength is also its weakness. Case study after case study, true story after true story, Breggin piles it on until the reader can be little else but convinced that psychiatric medications do more harm than good, convinced that the majority of psychiatric problems are made worse by, if not caused by, drug "treatments." This overwhelming yet easy-to-read case study/true story evidence is the book's strong point. But it is also a weakness because the skeptical reader may dismiss the work as little more than a bleeding heart's self-aggrandizing conspiracy theory. Even the most thorough reader may begin to skim or skip some of the stories because they become just another example of another life damaged if not destroyed by doctor-prescribed psychiatric drugs.

But the skeptic would be mistaken to dismiss this work. The objective scientific evidence to support Breggin's argument is presented in the book. But it is the stories, not the objective evidence that is at the forefront. For the nonacademic, nonprofessional, noncritical reader, it may not matter what is just a case story, what is Breggin's professional opinion, what is just Breggin's personal opinion, and what statements are actually supported with direct scientific and clinical research.

Even though the science is there, questions about the science behind Breggin's argument may arise because of Breggin's overreliance on Breggin; overreliance on his practice experiences, his stories, and his values. Breggin even tells a story where he is compared to an angel (he overheard a juror after he gave expert witness in a case). This repetitive self-promotion may turn away potential allies in the fight against the use of damaging psychiatric medicines.

Breggin coins the term "medication spellbinding" or simply "spellbinding" as a catchall phrase to refer to the disabling, often psychosis-inducing, side effects of many common psychiatric medications. This is an unfortunate oversimplification. At the neuronal level, by blocking reuptake of neurotransmitter molecules by the presynaptic neuron, SSRI drugs (Zoloft, Prozac, Paxil, etc., the "selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors") increase



activity of serotonin. But antipsychotic drugs such as Haldol and Risperdal that are also used for millions of people who are incorrectly labeled "bipolar" (see Flora & Bobby, 2008) decrease the activity of the "reward" neurotransmitter dopamine. In addition to serious behavioral, physical, and psychological side effects, both classes of drugs induce brain malfunction if not long-term brain damage (see Whitaker, 2002). But to lump them all together as "spellbinding" is an oversimplification. Despite the solid evidence for Breggin's concerns, this oversimplification may allow those in the pharmaceutical–psychiatric conglomerate to falsely dismiss *Medication Madness* as a work of unscientific sour grapes. Sleeping pills, "anti-depressants," and "anti-psychotics" all produce harmful effects, but the specific effects are different. They are not just a different case of the same "spellbinding."

Medication Madness does a good job separating pharmaceutical marketing myths from science. For example, rather than correct a chemical imbalance in the brain that has never been observed (the myth), psychiatric drugs create imbalances in the brain (the fact). Likewise, it is a marketing myth that psychological problems are like medical diseases and therefore the correct treatment is to take drugs. Breggin rightly argues that even for many legitimate medical disorders such as diabetes the treatment emphasis is on lifestyle changes, not drugs. The best treatment for psychological problems also involves lifestyle changes not drugs (Flora, 2007).

For those wanting a more scientific and intellectually satisfying account of how psychiatric drugs were developed (it wasn't to "treat" specific disorders), and how psychiatric drugs injure the brain, or of psychiatry's pitiful search for scientific and medical respectability, the reader has better choices, such as Robert Whitaker's *Mad in America* (2002), or Alan Horwitz's *Creating Mental Illness* (2002). But everyone who has a loved one on psychiatric drugs should read *Medication Madness*. Everyone who is receiving pressure to take psychiatric drugs and everyone who has been given a prescription for psychiatric drugs should read *Medication Madness.* For the scientifically illiterate general population, as politicians and marketers know all too well, a good story often has more of an impact than the presentation of dry facts. *Medication Madness* is full of good stories on the harmful effects of common psychiatric medications, which are also supported by the dry facts.

If psychiatric drugs don't help, but instead cause more harm, the problem of what to do remains. Here Breggin, like the rest of psychiatry and most

of psychology, is of little help. Psychiatrists are medical doctors trained to give medicine. That's what they do. They have little, if any, training in applying effective behavioral and psychological interventions. For a while psychiatrists turned to psychoanalysis as a treatment model. But as the fraud that is psychoanalysis has been increasingly revealed, psychiatry turned to an approach of "label problems as diseases and then 'treat' these 'diseases' with drugs." While this approach is immensely profitable, it is often unethical and just as much a scientific fraud as is psychoanalysis.

Breggin's answer for helping people with difficulties boils down to little more than advice to be nice, supportive, and compassionate. "Love is joyful awareness" and his other "principles of life" are nothing more than nice-sounding nonscientific psychobabble. Unfortunately, psychology, and the rest of the nonmedical "mental-health" professionals, have little else to provide. The American Psychological Society (now the Association for Psychological Science)—which broke away from the American Psychological Association in 1988 largely because the APA was too nonscientific, if not antiscientific—recently put out a major report showing that the practice of clinical psychology is almost completely nonscience-based. Despite decades of claiming to use a "scientist–practitioner" model, practicing psychologists just do what they feel, even when the so-called "treatment" is actually contraindicated by sound research.

In short, the vast majority of psychological approaches are either not helpful, or actually harmful. But behavior therapy has consistently been found to be more effective than either drugs or other forms of therapy in treating psychological problems including phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder, ADHD, depression, sleep problems, sexual dysfunction, and even schizophrenia (Flora, 2007). In fact, driven by consumer demand, driven by the demands of the parents of autistic children, several states have passed legislation recognizing behavioral analysis as the only scientifically supported treatment for autism, and require autism-treatment providers to be Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BACBs). To oversimplify the approach: Behavior therapy is a pragmatic approach that teaches clients functional behaviors to enable access to naturally occurring reinforcers in the individual's environment. This functional, behavior-contingent–reinforcement produces natural "anti-anxiety" and "anti-depressant" effects. Being engaged in life and increasingly gaining access to behavior-contingent context-specific reinforcers is incompatible with being depressed.

For those without access to solidly trained behavior therapists or behavior analysts, physical exercise has been increasingly shown to be an effective treatment for a wide range of psychological problems from depression (e.g., Babyak, et al., 2000, Dunn, et al., 2005) to erectile dysfunction (e.g., Cheng,

Ng, Ko, & Chen, 2007). That's right. Simple exercise, lifting weights, running, even a simple walk, is more effective than drugs and psychotherapy for treating many if not most psychological problems. If Breggin had pointed the reader toward either behavior therapy or exercise as viable alternatives to drugs, his book would have ended more satisfactorily, but instead the reader is left with the pragmatically empty "principles of life", not knowing what to do.

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Doctoring the Mind: Is Our Current Treatment of Mental Illness Really Any Good? by Richard P. Bentall. New York University Press, 2009. 364 pp. $29.95(hardcover). ISBN 97808147914791486.

Opinion vs. Opinion

There are in fact two things, science and opinion;
the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance. — Hippocrates

Today everyone knows someone who is "mentally ill", "possessed", "disturbed", "unhinged", or just plain "crazy". While past generations have been more open to all of these expressions, we have been taught to think only in terms of the first. Working hand in hand, the psychiatric and psychopharmacology establishments have indoctrinated us into the belief that any odd behaviour

or unpleasant feeling is due to an illness of either neurobiological or genetic origin. A natural corollary is that drugs are the cure.

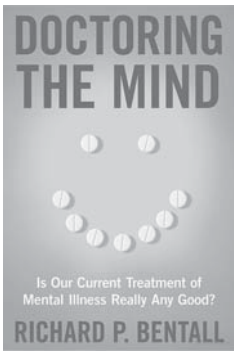
Doctoring the Mind by Richard Bentall, a professor of clinical psychology at the University of Manchester, challenges this belief.

After a cursory review of the history of psychiatry with a British slant, he systematically puts under scrutiny psychiatric diagnosis à la Kraeplin, and then the DSM (2000), psychiatric theories of genetic and brain factors, and psychiatric drugs. Pointing out methodological problems, statistical manipulations, and faulty assumptions, he concludes that "the dominant paradigm in psychiatry, which assumes that mental illnesses are genetically influenced brain diseases, has been *a spectacular failure*" (p. 264, emphasis added). "Conventional psychiatry," he declares, "has been profoundly unscientific and at the same time unsuccessful at helping some of the most distressed and vulnerable people in society" (p. vx)**.**

His conclusion is convincing as it follows from a critique of psychiatry that appears to be based on a good knowledge of science and the proper interpretation of research results. However, the read is so very dry and cluttered with technical detail that it seems unsuited to his intended audience—the "intelligent lay reader"—unless, of course, his intention is not so much to engage the reader as it is to convince the reader of his own scientific prowess.

Perhaps Bentall thinks that, having demonstrated himself to be a hard-nosed scientist when discrediting psychiatry, the reader will not notice that, when he turns his focus to psychology, he maintains a mere façade of science as he abandons the rigor. From the moment he begins to "examine" what he sees as the better alternative, one based on the therapeutic notions and approaches of clinical psychology, it is as if he is transformed. Gone is the critical examination of evidence, the demand for scientific evaluation of outcome, and the skepticism of claims. In fact, he makes his own outrageous claims that "the question of whether psychotherapy is helpful has been definitively answered" (p. 247), and that "the importance of these factors (such as 'therapeutic alliance') is now beyond dispute" (p. 249). Like an evangelical preacher, he declares "the good news that psychotherapy actually works" (p. 248).

His claims are reminiscent of the declaration of the 1994 questionnaire on psychotherapy conducted by *Consumer Reports*, the American magazine that rates about how satisfied consumers are with their vacuum cleaners and toasters. Based on members' responses to an opinion survey, Martin Seligman, the 1998 president of the American Psychological Association and the consultant to the project, described the results as sending *"a message of hope* for other people dealing with emotional problems" and as establishing *"a new gold standard"* for the evaluation of psychotherapy effectiveness (Seligman, 1995). All this was said despite an extremely low return rate, a skewed population sample, an



ignored control group, and many other methodological errors that would have rendered any other study invalid, not acceptable for publication, and therefore not warranting any further analysis or comment (for more on this study, see Dineen, 2001).

And on what does Bentall base his similarly exalted claims? Certainly not on studies conducted with the exactitude he demands of psychiatry. He would never allow psychiatric researchers to get away with the language he uses when commenting on psychotherapy. In one chapter focused on psychotherapy (contrasted to five directed at psychiatry), he identifies a selection of clinical studies in which, for example:

— "families," not the patients, "*usually* report considerable *satisfaction* after (behavioural family therapy)" (italics added) (p. 251)

— "Patients . . . treated with just five weeks of CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) had fewer positive symptoms at the end of an eighteen-month follow-up period than patients receiving conventional treatment, although the differences observed *were not very large*." (italics added) (p. 254)

By the second to last chapter, it is clear that this book is not about science but rather an attempt to win a power struggle—a battle between the professions of Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry in which the victor takes the spoils.

For after championing psychotherapy, what Bentall does is describe, based on arguments such as the unfounded ones he himself has made, how clinical psychology has been wresting some of the power (and the funding) for itself. For example,

> the economist (Lord) Richard Layard suggest(ion) that making CBT more available would probably have a positive impact on the British economy . . . Secretary of State for Health, Patricia Hewitt, announced a UK government-funded Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies initiative, which will involve the creation of a national network of centres providing CBT to people with depression and anxiety. (p. 253)

So, for Bentall, what the good news actually amounts to is that, while psychiatry has pharma-funding, it would seem that clinical psychology has the deeper coffers of the government.

If he had stopped here, he might simply have presented a manifesto for the rebalancing of mental health policy and funding. But he doesn't.

In his last chapter, he makes the strange, and entirely unfounded, statement that "severe mental illness," including that of schizophrenia and psychosis, "is an understandable reaction to the tribulations of life" (p. 269), and that "distress

in human beings is usually caused by unsatisfactory relationships with other human beings" (p. 265). Then he absurdly suggests that the "goals of treatment" by which treatment is evaluated, should be "whatever the patient thinks is most important" (p. 269).

Back in the first chapter, Bentall introduced us to Soteria House, housing six psychotic patients overseen by staff with no formal training in psychiatry or psychology "who used kindness, tolerance, and common sense" with the residents (p. 24). He concluded that "it seems, (they) can do well with no psychiatry at all" (p. 24). Later he picks up that theme by suggesting that the effective element of psychotherapy is "kindness." One might ask why he does not go on to conclude that these people (patients and staff) might do equally well with no psychology at all.

Near the end of the book, Bentall observes that "if we clinicians cannot agree among ourselves about such fundamental issues (of diagnosis and causality), it is difficult to see why our patients, who will suffer the consequences of our decisions, should be asked to put aside their own opinions" (p. 274).

Sadly, in the culture in which we live, people do think in terms of mental health and mental illness and do turn for help to these clinicians—whether they be psychologists or psychiatrists. The battle between these professions has been going on a long time with each claiming to be the more scientific. What Bentall has unintentionally, but clearly, demonstrated in his book is the extent to which the arguments of both tend toward opinion; when science vs. opinion is actually opinion vs. opinion, it all, as Hippocrates long ago warned us, boils down to ignorance.

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Filters and Reflections: Perspectives on Reality by Zachary Jones, Brenda Dunne, Robert Jahn, and Elissa Hoeger (Editors). ICRL Press, 2009. 289 pp. $17.95. ISBN 9781936033010.

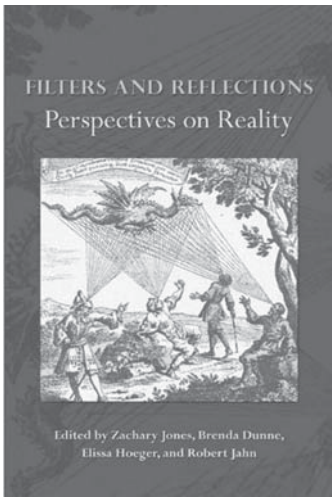
In my college days, I chanced across a wonderful poem called *Chuang Tzu and the Butterfly*, written by the well-known Chinese poet Li Po. In it, Chuang Tzu falls asleep and dreams he is a butterfly. When he awakes, he asks himself the question, "Am I a man who dreamed I was a butterfly, or am I now a butterfly dreaming I am a man?"

You have to be a bit peculiar to ask that question, and odder still to concern yourself with the answer. Other than the occasional poet, philosopher, or theologian, we take our consensus definition of reality for granted. Ontology and epistemology are not mankind's favorite subjects.

They never will be, but Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne sparked a modest revival of interest within the academic and scientific community with their 2004 paper "Sensors, Filters, and the Source of Reality" (*Journal of Scientific Exploration, 18*(4), 547–570). Based partly on their two-plus decades of rigorous research into psi (psychokinesis and ESP) conducted at the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) laboratory, Jahn and Dunne concluded that consciousness transcends the brain, and is more than just a mere antenna passively acquiring information from an independent, objective, out-there world. Instead, our consciousness is the "ultimate organizing principle of the universe." We co-create reality. This consensus reality we share, however, is an imperfect approximation of absolute Reality because it comes to us through an array of physiological, psychological, and cultural filters.

The nineteen essays included in this book collectively explore these ontological filters from a fascinating variety of viewpoints—art, Buddhism, evolutionary biology, fantasy, out-of-body experiences, philosophy, physics, psychology, semiotics, and systems engineering. But make no mistake: Reading this book can be work.

Some papers are provokingly dense and academic. Sample: "The *representamen*, similar to Saussure's signifier, is the perceptible part of the sign—for example, the written letters 'b-e-l-l.' The *object* is the referent of the representamen, in other words, the physical object that rings when shaken. The *interpretant* is the understanding and interpretation of this connection, similar to Saussure's signified…" If you're not familiar with semiotic analysis, or uninterested in poststructuralism, it's a trudge. Meanwhile, I found the closing essay downright bizarre: ". . . This essay shares Sam's experiences as he confronts Od, Po, and Dwinkle, the big squishy scintillating glob that the gnomes call Everything, unpredictable and insubstantial drywall of seemingly random translocation, and markedly unsettling eyewear. . . ." You applaud the



author for the attempt, but you wince at the result.

Still, many papers surprise and delight. Vasileios Basios examines the impact chaos and complexity studies are having on classical determinism, reductionistic mechanics, and a static, monolithic vision of reality—all current, pervasive, reality filters. William Eddy, Jr., offers up four folksy essays illustrating how verbal metaphors shape human thought, deftly driving home his points using Shakespeare, Galileo, Walt Kelly's Pogo, and the experience of a returned Peace Corps volunteer from Ohio. Psychoanalyst Ruth Rosenbaum cautions that we accumulate filters from the moment we are born. Culture, gender, religion, genetics, and family dynamics are dominant filters that form "powerful lenses through which every other experience is shaped in both overt and subtle, unconscious ways." Scientists are no more immune to these filters than laypersons. Recognizing and removing these filters is a Sisyphean challenge.

My favorite is John Valentino's essay "You'll Never Get There from Here: REG Experiments and Conventional Assumptions about Reality." Valentino worked for a year in the PEAR laboratory as an experimenter, hardware designer, and data analyst. Like Jahn and Dunne, he concluded that consciousness can interact with the physical world, and can be demonstrated scientifically. But Valentino argues that we'll never explain *how* consciousness accomplishes this until we remove our conventional scientific and philosophical filters and view subjective and objective reality as complementary. The PEAR experiments, for example, demonstrate that human intention and attention (subjective realities) can affect whether more polystyrene balls in a random mechanical cascade fall to the left side or the right side (objective reality). "We cannot continue to separate them if we truly hope to understand our experience in this universe."

In the end, when it comes to comprehending Reality we're both the solution and the problem. The solution, because with effort we can become aware of the subtle filters making us mistake the dancing shadows on the wall of Plato's cave for Reality. The problem, because first we have to accept that we're looking at shadows.

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A Tale of Two Sciences: Memoirs of a Dissident Scientist by Peter A. Sturrock. Exoscience, 2009. 221 pp. $24.95 (paperback). ISBN 0984261400.

On the morning of October 28, 2008, I received an email message from Peter Sturrock, motivated by two papers I had coauthored with Jere Jenkins (and other colleagues), which we had recently posted on the Web. These (now-published) papers presented evidence for a possible solar influence on nuclear decay rates, and Sturrock was interested in collaborating with us on a further analysis of the data we presented. Although I did not know Sturrock personally at that time, I knew him quite well through his work, and had referred to several of his papers in my own. Sturrock was—and remains—a towering figure in solar physics, the author of more than 300 scientific papers (most in solar physics but others in astrophysics, plasma physics, electron physics, and statistics). Hence, to me his proposal that we join forces was the rough equivalent of Roger Federer asking to be my doubles partner. I quickly said yes, and thus began a close and productive collaboration that continues to this day.

The two sciences referred to in the title of this book are spelled out clearly in the Preface: They are what he calls "real science", or "PC" (politically correct) science, and "non-PC" (not politically correct) science. The author's stated goal in this book is ". . . to argue that no topic is (or is not) intrinsically "scientific"—it is the research on the topic that may or may not so qualify." What is so compelling about this book is that it is authored by an individual who has a leg in each camp, and who—for this reason—deserves to be taken seriously when he discusses "non-PC" subjects such as UFOs and parapsychology.

As a working physicist, I particularly like Feynman's definition of science (Schweber, 1994) (what Sturrock would call "PC" science):

> Science can be defined as a method for, and a body of information obtained by, trying to answer only questions which can be put into the form: If I do this, what will happen? (Schweber, 1994:462)

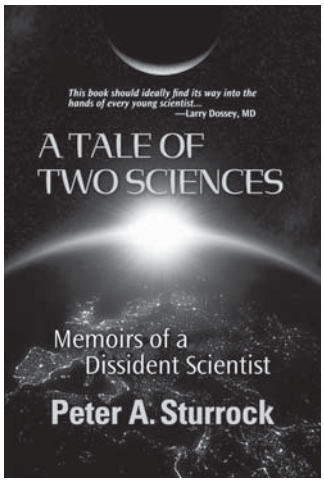
Feynman's definition embodies two of the criteria that most of us feel are the hallmarks of science: the study of phenomena which (1) are in principle reproducible, and (2) lead to falsifiable predictions. As we discuss below, "non-PC" science thus falls on a spectrum somewhere between "PC" science and frameworks such as "creation science", which is neither reproducible nor falsifiable even in principle. Before turning to Sturrock's discussion of "non-PC" science, let us set the stage by following his brilliant career in "PC" science.

Chapters 2–6, Part 1 of the book, take us through Sturrock's career, beginning with his birth in 1924 and his early childhood in a working class

neighborhood of South Stifford, England. For someone who would become a world-famous scientist, he we learn not surprisingly even as a boy displayed an interest in mechanical objects. These chapters cover his early years at Cambridge (an average student, but good at mathematics and tennis), his work on radar during WWII, his return to Cambridge where he achieved the distinction of a University prize and a college fellowship, and his eventual arrival at Stanford in 1955, where he has been ever since. Here the author does an excellent job of succinctly describing in layman's terms the various science projects he has worked on including the theory of solar flares, which he regards as the work for which he is best known in the world of solar physics. An entire chapter is devoted to his work on solar neutrinos (which is the focus of our ongoing collaboration).

As interesting as I found these chapters to be for their insights into the author's "PC" science, they become even more compelling when they describe his entry into the world of "non-PC" science. We learn in Chapter 1 that he saw what we now would call a "UFO" on an autumn day in 1947 when he was a student at Cambridge, an experience he describes as "very disturbing". He goes on to note that this ". . . was my first encounter with an unorthodox world that does not conform to the orthodox, neatly packaged, world of conventional science." His interest in parapsychology, one of the other "non-PC" subjects covered in this book, was sparked by his first wife, Betty, who introduced him to the work of J. B. and Louisa Rhine at Duke University. In both of these encounters with "non-PC" science, Sturrock experiences standard negative reactions from his "PC" colleagues.

Given others' reactions, it is commendable that Sturrock, an obviously brilliant "PC" physicist, has maintained his interest in "non-PC" science, and has now chosen to openly discuss his views in this book. Of the two main subjects he deals with in the "non-PC" realm, UFOs and parapsychology, the latter is easier to discuss within the framework described earlier, so we begin there. The author was again introduced to this subject in 1978, by attending a lecture on the subject by Robert Jahn from Princeton, who was at that time a visiting professor at Stanford and was asked to give some lectures. This is a vast field with an extensive literature, so the author can be excused for limiting his discussion to a description of just a few experiments, such as those utilizing "random event generators" (REGs). Here the idea is to see whether a subject can influence an ostensibly random process (e.g., flipping a fair coin) in such a way as to skew the expected results (equal numbers of heads and tails) in a statistically significant way. In the spirit of the Feynman criterion cited earlier, such an inquiry would indeed qualify as science, or "PC" science, if subjects could be found who reproducibly produced statistically significant results. The fact that this has not proven to be the case to date, as the author himself notes



with respect to one set of experiments, does not disqualify this from being science.

The preceding discussion raises a question that would have benefited from more attention: *To what extent does our distinction between "PC" and "non-PC" science depend on the existence of a plausible mechanism for the phenomenon being studied?* Whether or not this should be the case, skepticism about both parapsychology and UFOs likely has as much to do with the absence of a plausible mechanism as it does with reproducibility of data.

This brings us to the author's discussion of UFOs (unidentified flying objects), which, almost by definition, represent phenomena that are not reproducible by us in the usual sense. As noted earlier, Sturrock had a disturbing personal UFO experience while at Cambridge in 1947. However, his interest in this question appears to have remained dormant until it was rekindled in 1971 by a research scientist he hired (for other purposes) named Jacques Vallee, who had written several books on UFOs. With his typical open-mindedness, Sturrock immersed himself in the UFO literature, which is outlined in Chapter 7. As in the case of parapsychology, the literature on this subject is so extensive that Sturrock can again be excused for presenting only a brief synopsis. This includes in Chapter 8 his critique of the well-known 1969 Condon Report, which brought to an end the U.S. Air Force involvement in the study of UFOs, and which has been criticized by other authors as well. Having read that report myself when it first became public, I can support Sturrock's criticism of its handling of some of the cases. Even though many, if not most, sightings can be explained in terms of conventional science or as hoaxes, those that cannot should presumably be of special interest to scientists.

In the framework of the author's discussion of "PC" versus "non-PC" science, an interesting fact emerged as a result of a survey conducted by the author of members of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) on the subject of UFOs, which is described in Chapter 10. Sturrock notes that ". . . a large fraction (80%) of respondents expressed a willingness to contribute to the resolution of the UFO problem if they could see a way to do so, but, of those expressing this interest, only 13% could see a way to help." The author goes on to add, "This is a central dilemma of the UFO problem." Although this widely held view explains why UFOs remain "non-PC" science, the author's view that these phenomena are worth studying is certainly justifiable.

Space prevents a more detailed view of some of the other "non-PC" science

that Sturrock deals with, which I found quite illuminating. Of particular interest to me was the author's use of Bayes' theorem ("PC" math/science) to study the "non-PC" subject of UFOs. Bayes' theorem and other topics are discussed in a series of very readable Appendices. At the end of Chapter 16, he offers the following opinion:

> If the non-traditional topics discussed in Chapters 7 through 15 are studied according to the precepts of scientific inference [which are based on Bayes' theorem], then their study merits the term "science" just as much as the study of traditional topics such as those discussed in Chapters 1 through 6.

This is, of course, a much more flexible interpretation of "science" than the one by Feynman cited earlier in this review. This flexibility makes it possible for Sturrock to regard parapsychology and similar disciplines as candidates for consideration as "science".

In summary, this is an extremely well-written book by a very respected physicist who has had the courage to explore controversial ("non-PC") questions with an open mind. It should be required reading for any student embarking on a career in science.

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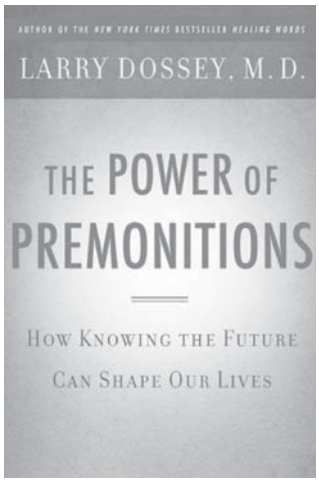
The Power of Premonitions: How Knowing the Future Can Shape Our Lives by Larry Dossey. Dutton Adult, 2009. 320 pp. $25.95. ISBN 9780525951164.

Larry Dossey is a *New York Times* bestselling writer for a reason. He persistently leavens his scientific research with wonderful anecdotes and intriguing tidbits of information, here offering his fresh take on a time-worn subject familiar to most SSE members.

J. B. and Louisa Rhine and the generation which followed them wrote the book on premonitions, establishing the evidence and describing their what, why, and how. Dossey recaps their pioneering work; presents a grab bag of broadly defined premonition cases both familiar and fresh; then turns the



spotlight on what he calls "the most important experiment in psi research" today—Dean Radin's "presentiment effect" research. Dick Bierman, Rupert Sheldrake, Ed May, and others have since successfully replicated Radin's experiments first launched in 1993, rekindling the kind of excitement and hope Charles Honorton brought to psi research 20 years earlier with his celebrated Ganzfeld experiments. Dossey also credits Radin for taking psi research into the 21st century. In August 2000, Radin uploaded his "Got Psi?" online suite of psi experiments and invited the public to play. By 2006, Radin had logged more than 20 million trials—collecting more test data in six years than Rhine did in sixty.

But spontaneous experiences enjoy star billing in this book. The author constantly entertains as he instructs, adroitly using everyone from Harriet Tubman and Bernie Madoff to Oscar the "feline angel of death." He's also thought-provoking. We're conditioned by New Age treacle to think of premonitions as gifts of the gods to the needy worthy. So when Winston Churchill uses intuition to escape a bomb during the Blitz, we nod our heads knowingly. But Dossey follows it up with a zinger: In World War I, evil incarnate Adolph Hitler also dodged death when, acting on his own premonition, he scooted down a trench just before a shell exploded where he had been standing guard. The point? Like it or not, premonitions are a common "human birthright." It's up to each of us whether we cultivate our native, intuitive powers or not.

Dossey strongly argues we should, starting with his own medical profession. He speaks from personal experience. One of his patients at Dallas Diagnostic knocked on his door one morning, worried sick. In an exceptionally vivid dream, she had seen three little white spots on her left ovary. No symptoms, nothing else. Instead of dismissing her, he ordered a sonogram from a skeptical radiologist who gave him his best "you got to be kidding me" glance. An hour later the radiologist walked in, nervous and pale, and handed Dossey the sonogram. Three little white spots, on her left ovary. Fortunately they were benign cysts.

"We pay a price for excluding premonitions from our concepts of healing," Dossey warns. "This is nowhere more obvious than in sudden death infant syndrome." SIDS is the leading cause of death in infants between the ages of one month and one year in the United States, and premonitions are a recurring feature in the experiences of SIDS parents. One scientific study of 174 SIDS

parents found more than one in five had a premonition that their child might die. More than half of the parents described a vivid dream, or auditory or visual hallucination while awake. A third of the SIDS parents actually confronted their physician with their premonition. "Although they requested further medical intervention and tests, *non-routine medical follow-up was not recommended for any of the SIDS infants studied*" (author's italics), leaving many parents feeling both angry and guilty for not pushing their pediatricians harder to do something.

You feel for everyone involved—the grieving parents; the average physician who simply lacks the understanding or courage to take premonitions seriously; and a strained health care system struggling just to pay for accepted treatment modalities, much less inexplicable "woo-woo."

So when should we pay attention to our premonitions? Dossey's advice is simple and succinct: Pay attention when they're accompanied by physical symptoms; pay attention if they're intrusive and insistent; pay attention when they indicate death, no matter how fuzzy the details may be.

His suggestions for readers wishing to become more "premonition prone" are poetic: "Court difference, variety and ambiguity in your life, relax and let go. Don't try too hard. Give up your pet ideas of how the world *should* work. Make a place for variety, risk, novelty, playfulness, generosity and mystery in your life. As Rumi advises, 'Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment.' If you do these things, you will probably discover that the universe meets you more than halfway, perhaps with premonitions as its calling card." (No wonder scientists report fewer premonitions.)

But he serves up his tip sheet with a sober warning: "Premonitions can be grossly misleading, and they can be used as an excuse for irresponsible, reckless or criminal behavior." Marshall Herff Applewhite, leader of the Heaven's Gate cult, triggered the largest mass suicide in the history of the United States when he and 38 of his followers acted on his premonition that the earth was about to be "recycled" of human life, and decided their ticket to survival was to shed their bodies and catch a ride on the spaceship they believed was trailing comet Hale–Bopp. "This side of the psyche can be a minefield, and is not for everyone."

Still, if you're an SSE member bored with merely reading about scientific anomalies, and studiously practice your premonition skills, it's a relatively safe and easily accessible mind field ripe for personal exploration.

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Traité de Métapsychique by Charles Richet. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1922. 815 pp. Available free at http://books.google.com/books?id=xo8FAQAAIAAJ&dq=richet+traite+de+metapsychique, and http://www.archive.org/details/traitdemtaps00rich

Although overviews of psychical research such as the one reviewed here are appreciated, they are not generally considered to be particularly important or influential beyond the panoramic views, summaries, and bibliographies they provide. An exception is the book reviewed here, authored by French physiologist Charles Richet (1850–1935), which was later translated into English from its second edition (Richet, 1923). Richet had in mind the preparation of this book in 1905 when, in his Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) he presented the term *métapsychique* (metapsychics) to refer to psychical research and mentioned that a possible title for his future book was *Traité de Métapsychique* (Richet, 1905b:13).

By the time *Traité* was published, Richet was well-known in psychical research. This was evident from the frequent and multiple citations he received in general French books about the topic (e.g., Coste, 1895:v, xiii, 59, 101, 199, 221). During the 1880s. he conducted research about what we would refer to today as ESP, as seen in his reports "La Suggestion Mentale et le Calcul des Probabilités" (Richet, 1884) and "Further Experiments in Hypnotic Lucidity or Clairvoyance" (Richet, 1889). Later on he was involved with bringing psychical research into the 1889 Congress of Physiological Psychology, the development and publication of the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, the medium Eusapia Palladino (Richet, 1893), and the presidency of the SPR. He authored many more papers about psychic phenomena and their study, among them a highly controversial report of materialization phenomena with medium Marthe Béraud (Richet, 1905a).

Richet's Preface states that readers expecting "nebulous" discussions about "man's destiny, about magic, about theosophy" (p. i) would be disappointed. Instead, he would write about facts without advancing a theory, because in his view theories in metapsychics were "astoundingly frail" (p. i).

The *Traité* is divided into four "books" or sections. The first is a general perspective on metapsychics, which was defined by Richet as "a science which object is phenomena, mechanical or psychological, due to seemingly intelligent forces or to unknown latent powers in human intelligence" (p. 5). He classified the field into subjective and objective metapsychics, terms he used to refer to mental and physical phenomena. The section also includes a discussion of history in which the author divided the subject into four periods. These periods were denominated by Richet as: mythical (up to Mesmer), magnetic (from Mesmer to the Fox sisters), spiritistic (from the Fox sisters to William

Crookes), and scientific (starting with Crookes). Richet hoped that his book would start a fifth period.

Richet saw the scientific period as the high point of the history of interest in metapsychic phenomena and separated it conceptually and methodologically from previous movements. In fact, he pictured mesmerism, as well as spiritism and spiritualism, as stages in the development of metapsychics. Previous movements, Richet believed, had too much theory, something that metapsychics must be careful with. But he believed it would have been an injustice to despise the magnetizers and the spiritists. Their work, Richet stated, "contributed to the founding of metapsychics" (p. 40). But in his view their time was past. Nowadays a medium should not be wasted in informal spiritistic circles "without the use of methods of research adopted by all the sciences, balances, photography, cinematography, graphic registration. Similarly . . . rigorous, strict investigation, similar to those the S.P.R. [Society for Psychical Research] has conducted, is indispensable" (p. 40).

The second part of the book is about "subjective metapsychics." Richet started with a section in which he attempted to separate phenomena that could be explained via conventional ideas of the action of the subconscious mind such as automatisms, personation, and pantomnesia (or memories of all the past experiences of the person), from phenomena such as telepathy and the like requiring explanations beyond the conventional (I have presented a reprint of this section elsewhere [Alvarado, 2008]). He wrote that:

> "to separate the psychic [psychological] from the metapsychic, we adopt the following criterion: *Everything that may be done by human intelligence, even the very profound and skillful, is psychic. Everything a human intelligence cannot do . . . would be metapsychic*" (p. 62, italics in the original).

Two other sections were about chance and observation errors. Such discussions were not only proper in a book like this to show how psychical researchers have been aware of conventional explanations and the precautions they have taken to avoid them, but also served a rhetorical function in that it gave credibility to Richet's defenses of the reality of the metapsychic realm beyond the counterexplanations of science.

The rest of this part of the book is devoted to what Richet called *cryptesthesia*. This meant a "hidden sensibility, a perception of things, unknown regarding its mechanisms, and of which we cannot know but its effects" (p. 74). Richet discussed spontaneous and experimental examples of this faculty. He included his own observations and studies, such as those with a woman he referred to as Alice, and discussed the topic as manifested in mediums such as Leonora E. Piper, and in various ways, among them psychometry and premonitions. The spontaneous occurrences were classified as monitions involving non-serious and serious events (other than death), death, and those perceived collectively.

Richet mentioned that cryptesthesia showed no time and space limitations. He wrote that the phenomena "is very strange, and we do not understand it at all," but such lack of understanding did not mean the acceptance of spiritual entities following "savages who attributed forces of Nature to a Divinity . . . ." (p. 252).

Part 3 is about physical phenomena. In addition to hauntings (and poltergeists), it includes chapters about phenomena infrequently discussed in modern parapsychology, namely telekinesis, materializations, levitation, and bilocation. The latter was defined by Richet as the simultaneous presence of a person in different locations. He rejected the existence of objective bilocation as the duplication of the human body, but accepted that apparitions representing the individual could be perceived as if the person was alive and that this represented a modality of cryptesthesia.

Regardless of the fraudulent practices of some physical mediums, Richet was convinced that there were real telekinetic and ectoplasmic manifestations. Among many observations, he discussed medium Florence Cook and the famous Katie King materialization, and his own observations with medium Marthe Béraud. Regarding Béraud, Richet presented some notes he compiled in 1906 in which he saw ectoplasmic forms move and take shapes. He also paid attention to many other mediums, among them Linda Gazzera, D. D. Home, Eusapia Palladino, and Stanislawa Tomczyk.

In the conclusion, the fourth part of the book, Richet states that the collective weight of all evidence shows the reality of metapsychic phenomena. This, he believed, was the case regardless of criticisms:

> Therefore: 1) there is in us a faculty of knowledge that is absolutely different from our common sensory faculties of knowledge (cryptesthesia); 2) movement of objects without contact are produced, even in plain light (telekinesis); 3) there are hands, bodies, objects, that appear to be formed completely from a cloud and show all the appearances of life (ectoplasmy); 4) there are presentiments that neither perspicacity nor chance can explain, and sometimes they are verified to their smallest details. (p. 761)

Also in the conclusion, Richet returned to his view that metapsychics should be an empirical specialty whose current task should not be the defense of particular models. In fact, if there was a perspective characterizing the *Traité* it

was that of the need to have an ultra-empirical metapsychics with little theoretical content. Consistent with this view, Richet stated he was not convinced of any explanation so far offered to account for metapsychic phenomena and that at present (1922) no cohesive theory could be presented. He was particularly critical of explanations based on the concept of discarnate action, something he discussed in other publications. Nonetheless, and regardless of his protestations, Richet was not completely atheoretical. He was positive about the idea that unknown human faculties and forces were at work, and, as he discussed in the *Traité*, he used the concepts of personation and cryptesthesia to explain the manifestation of mental mediumship (Alvarado, 2008). Richet also speculated about forces in reference to materializations:

> Materialization is a mechanical projection. . . . Is it not a very long way to consider possible, other than projections of heat, light, and electricity, a projection of a mechanical force? The memorable demonstrations of Einstein establish to what extent mechanical energy is similar to luminous energy. (pp. 597–598)

Such an idea, while perhaps too vague to be called a theory, was consistent with an old model of biophysical forces present throughout the literatures of mesmerism, spiritualism, and psychical research (for an overview see Alvarado, 2006).

Richet concluded his book with hope for the future, as he did in other publications. Currently, "when everything is still in darkness" (p. 793), Richet stated that there was a pressing need to move forward with research. "Then Metapsychics will come out of Occultism, as Chemistry was separated from Alchemy" (p. 793). The situation, Richet continued, may seem to be too dark and difficult to solve. He further wrote: "But this is no reason for not increasing our efforts and labors. . . . The task is so beautiful that, even if we fail, the honor of having undertaken it gives some value to life" (p. 793).

Such views were consistent with Richet's general outlook on science. Like other scientists, he saw science as a slow process based on "patient, long, and difficult research" that could at best only promise to diminish slightly our overall ignorance (Richet, 1899:35).

This book received much publicity when it was first published in 1922. Richet presented it to the prestigious Académie des Sciences, referring to the phenomena in question as "new" and "inhabitual" (Mémoires et Communications, 1922:430). The reception of *Traité* was surprising for an introductory book about psychical research. It was repeatedly reviewed as a special book. Examples of this are the long and not always positive discussions of it in journals dedicated to psychic phenomena such as the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* (Holt, 1922), *Luce e Ombra* (Bozzano, 1922), and the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* (Lodge, 1923). A prominent example of a review appearing in the journals of

other disciplines is that authored by Pierre Janet in the *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* (Janet, 1923).

There is no question that the book was comprehensive and systematic, and this made it valuable as a general introduction to the subject. It is in fact one of the best overviews of psychical research for the period in question. Richet's insistence on the collection of facts, to the neglect of theories, made the book his personal manifesto of psychical research. He projected an image of metapsychics as a science, arguing for the existence of a field that had a subject matter and a right to exist. But as much as the book was a summary of facts, it was also Richet's attempt to construct and promote the subject of metapsychics.

However, in both *Traité* and later publications, such as his autobiographical memoir *Souvenirs d'un Physiologiste* Richet (1933), he described the discipline as being in a preliminary stage of development. Nonetheless, he stated in this later book, "I am convinced it is the science of the future" (p. 156).

Unfortunately, Richet's neglecting to summarize theoretical models properly and to include systematic discussions or research methodologies weaken the status of *Traité* as a rigorous textbook. I believe the empirical approach defended by Richet in the book would have received support in discussions of theories and methodologies.

For many, particularly in France, *Traité* became an exemplar of the "new" science, and this took place in spite of much criticism. Why, one may ask, did Richet's book attain such a status? After all, the content of *Traité* was not innovative or revolutionary, so why did it command so much attention and respect? In fact, in many ways *Traité* was rather dry and uninspired. I believe there are at least two reasons.

First, Richet's book cannot be dismissed as just a relatively unimportant exercise in synthesis. In fact, this characteristic of the book is one of the aspects identified by Ceccarelli (2001) as being important to produce influential books that assist in the development of interdisciplinary communities. Synthesis is present in *Traité* in the form of a modest non-theoretical integration based on the accumulation of facts presented to show the existence of a phenomenon. Ceccarelli believes that such influential books present two other characteristics, the development of an "authorial persona," and the fact that the text is addressed to more than one audience. The first point perhaps includes Richet's strong and repeated ultra-empirical and anti-survival stances, while the second may also be present in that several audiences benefited from the work: scientists, psychical researchers, and the general public. While I do not want to push this view too much, it seems to me that the book could be studied in more detail from this perspective.

Second, the author commanded much attention due to his eminence. Richet—who worked in such various fields as aviation, eugenics, history,

literature, pacifism, philosophy, psychical research, psychology, and sociology—was a well-known and highly respected intellectual. He published much research on physiological topics such as animal heat, breathing, stomach acid, serotherapy, and anaphylaxis. As early as 1879, he was referred to in an American medical journal as being "well-known to the medical public as one of the rising younger Frenchmen of scientific tastes and ability, already the author of several works of merit" (Putnam, 1879:815). He also had several important academic positions and honors before the publication of *Traité*. These included being editor of the *Revue Scientifique*, Professor of Physiology at the Faculté de Médicine in Paris, member of the Académie de Médicine and of the Académie des Sciences, and Nobel prize winner for his work on anaphylaxis. In addition, Richet had many social advantages. His wealth and high social position, coming both from his father and from his mother's family, allowed him many personal connections that facilitated publishing and being heard in different forums (on these issues, see Wolf, 1993).

All this meant that a treatise about psychic phenomena from such a man would not be ignored and would be seen as a more important event than publications on the topic by less eminent individuals. His persona was a social and intellectual beacon that attracted many, who would either praise or condemn him for his positive belief in the existence of metapsychic phenomena and for his involvement with the topic.

Modern researchers will find *Traité* of value for several reasons. The book is a reference work presenting many summaries of studies, bibliographical references, and evidential claims about psychic phenomena for the pre-1922 period. In addition, those current researchers who are not familiar with the old psychical research literature will find in this book a window into the past, a past somewhat different from the present, as seen in the emphasis on gifted subjects, such as psychics and mediums, on the phenomena of physical mediumship, and on the issue of survival of death.

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De L'Inconscient au Conscient by Gustave Geley. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1919. [**From the Unconscious to the Conscious** by Gustave Geley, 1920, Glasgow: William Collins. Available free at: http://www.archive.org/details/FromTheUnconsciousToTheConscious.]

Context

Born in Montceau-les-Mines, Gustave Geley (1865–1924) completed his medical studies in Lyon before practicing medicine in Annecy until 1918. Richet (quoted by Tocquet, 1963, p. 270) stated that he had a very good reputation as a doctor in his region, but the demon of research finally made him leave his profession. A member of the Société d'Etudes Psychiques in Geneva since 1895, he had witnessed phenomena of lucidity, somnambulism, and premonition, which he recorded in his first book in 1897: *Essaidere Vue Générale et d'Interprétation Synthétique du Spiritisme*. Two years later he developed a model of the psyche from his observations in *L'Être Subconscient* (1899). Both these books were published under the pseudonym of E. Gyel.

He attracted the attention of psychists in 1916, when he began working with Juliette Bisson (1861–1956) to test the physical phenomena of mediumship produced by Marthe Béraud (1886–?). Following his meetings with Gabriel Delanne (1857-1926) "of whom he became the physician", Rocco Santoliquido (1854–1930), an Italian physician and politician introduced to spiritualism, and Jean Meyer (1855–1931), a wealthy wine merchant of Béziers, he would be entrusted with the task of scientifically studying these so-called paranormal phenomena. Meyer was the primary financeer of a modest laboratory on Avenue Suffren in Paris in 1917, and then he founded the Institut Metapsychique International in 1919, with Geley as its first director. Geley died accidentally in July 1924 when he was returning from Warsaw with new "evidence" of ectoplasmic materializations[1].

The book *De l'Inconscientau Conscient* (*From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, translated by Stanley de Brathin in 1921) was written between 1915 and 1918, spanning several periods of Geley's professional life. In 1912, he published in Annecy *Monisme Idéaliste et Palingénésie*, which is a philosophical work on a vitalist conception[2] of the evolution of life resulting from psychical facts. Geley's ideas were already well-advanced when he tried to give a moral orientation to his doctrine during the First World War. He was then assigned to Taourirt, Morocco, and compensated by advocating an idealistic and optimistic vision of humanity. He returned from Morocco thanks to Santoliquido who was appointed to Paris in the summer of 1915, when Italy entered the Allies' side, as the head of the Comission Sanitaire des Paysalliés. Santoliquido sought a secretary rather than having one imposed. Already exchanging letters although never having met, the two men would have the opportunity to be close professionally, enabling them to frequently discuss the topics of metapsychics and spiritualism.

The other pole of the book is represented by the pamphlet called *La Physiologie Dite Supranormale et les Phénomènes d'Idéoplastie* (Paris, 1918), which is extracted from his conference on January 28, 1918, at the College de France, invited by Professor Arsène d'Arsonval (1851-1940), then president of the Institut Général Psychologique, where he had been convinced of the authenticity of the phenomena produced by the medium Eusapia Palladino. Geley's conference was based on his observations of Marthe Beraud starting September 26, 1916, at Bisson's home, and which would last until the autumn of 1917 (with a summer break), with at least two sessions per week. Geley led further sessions in his laboratory from December 10, 1917, to March 10, 1918. Drawing on photography (24 photo prints illustrate his text), he sought to demonstrate that materialization phenomena are genuine and obey laws which are those of a certain physiology admitting of ideoplasty.

In short, the whole purpose of the book is to build a theory of the evolution

8. Female head completely materialised, but of miniature dimensions. (At the same seance I saw it of normal size, but missed the opportunity of taking a photograph.)

of the living that incorporates and, at the same time, supports the existence of ectoplasmic materialization. A final aspect of the context is that the publication is made in the year of the establishment of the Institut Métapsychique International where funds were allocated to test mediums under the best conditions (30 subjects in 1919 only). Then this book is also a scientific program (a "plan," said Geley, p. 338) and a open call to experimental subjects. As an experimenter, many said that Geley excelled. The book *Clairvoyance and Materialization* (Geley, 1924) is considered the culmination of his research, but others (e.g., Tocquet, 1963) complain about the frequent lack of detail in his experimental reports.

Contents

The book begins with a methodological introduction explaining the importance of starting with the "higher" facts such as ectoplasmic materialization to build a theoretical basis for understanding the physiology and psychology of the subconscious. Complicated nomenclature (as with Boirac, criticized by Geley) or the study of only the basic structures were apparently each in the wrong direction. Geley advocated a scientific philosophy based on a positive demonstration and on a synthetic method for understanding complex facts.

Book I is a critical analysis of conventional theories of evolution (first part) and of physiological and psychological individuality (second part). The supernormal physiology is used as an argument against the classical theories, but many classic arguments are also mentioned. Geley claimed that Darwinism is unable to explain the transformations by incomplete mutations which the animal did not use; and that Lamarckism is powerless to explain the adaptation to an environment in which the animal does not live yet. There would be abrupt and immediate stable transformations (mutations) unexplained by a model of progressive transformations through drafts.

On the basis of this challenge of conventional theories, Geley allowed himself to propose a new model where the ectoplasm becomes intelligible. He used analogies with known biological phenomena to remove the incomprehensible anomalous character of ectoplasmy. His thought is structured around three key concepts that, according to him, logically result from the facts: the unity of the substance, the organizing dynamism, and the conditioning of this dynamism by the idea[3] (p. 75).

Geley (p. 53) described the ectoplasm as a two-step process. First, a substance that was already there will externalize from the medium. This substrate can have any form, a white veil or a sort of saliva, but will then gradually begin to represent various things, mostly more or less complex organs. The representations are therefore organized as seconds even if "the substance has a immediate and irresistible tendency to organization" (p. 57–58). All transitions between complete and incomplete forms occur, so that "substance rudiments" or "organs simulacra" enlighten, according to Geley (p. 61), the mechanisms behind the genes in the form of a true "metapsychic embryology".

Geley attributed to a superior dynamism the role of modelling this primary paste, but also, by generalization, the organism in general.

> It's not just the directive idea of Claude Bernard, a kind of abstraction, of metaphysical and biological entity that remains incomprehensible; it is a practical concept, that of a director and centralized dynamism, which dominates intrinsic and extrinsic contingencies, chemical reactions of the organic milieu such as ambient influences of the external environment" (p. 51).

Close to the theories of Frederic Myers (1903), Geley assigned to the subliminal Self this "mysterious and impenetrable Unconscious" (p. 75) the role of organizer of the psychic and the organic. No paranormal phenomena depend on the conscious will, because they are all produced either by an apparently foreign will or by a subconscious idea or personality (p. 99). Following Schopenhauer, he put the individual as the common center of body and mind, but he added that, as there may be several streams of personalities cohabiting in one being, there may be several bodies for a single individual, with other representations that may objectify themselves outside the normal and supposedly unique body. Geley didn't completely eliminate the possibility of interference by external entities (pp. 276–277), but he did not really need them.

Book II introduces models of the subconscious of the turn of the twentieth century, primarily about individuality (first part) and about evolution (second part). This connection is possible via a general metaphysics where life tends toward the development of consciousness in a continuous progress from the Unconscious to the Conscious. The human being would be superior to animals because its consciousness can triumph over matter, following the movement of "spiritualization" detectable in nature. Geley immediately drew moral consequences by imposing a "rational optimism" with regard to individual and collective evolution (third party). Humanity tends ideally toward the achievement of supreme consciousness, justice, and good.

Geley relied on the philosopher Henri Bergson, whose books addressed the same topics as French psychists (Larcher, in Méheust, 1997), to criticize the psychophysical parallelism and cerebral localizations (p. 86 et seq.). For

example, he claimed that observations of indestructible memories were fatal to the theories of brain imprinting (p. 133). Geley introduced the subconscious psyche as the higher and more complex area in the psychological being. Here he pertinently shifted away from psychologists of his time, Janet, Grasset, Jastrow, Sollier, Ribot, with the conception of a subliminal self as the reservoir of the worst and the best in humans. Geley (p. 111 et seq.) distinguished the automatic or morbid (inferior) subconscious and the active or supernormal (superior) subconscious. All models that were unable to integrate the most wonderful psychic faculties seemed inadequate in his eyes. The pessimistic and pathological Unconscious of Freudian psychoanalysts is not even mentioned, perhaps because it was not yet well-known in France at that time (Roudinesco, 2009). Geley also disliked the pessimism of Schopenhauer, who admitted an unbridgeable gap, an essential difference between the conscious and the unconscious. Yet the evidence of subconscious activities demonstrates a possible bridge, and, even more, a dynamism already in progress (p. 208).

Geley proposed a model of the psyche that offers itself as a viable alternative to past and present models. It is a kind of neo-interactionist dualism that goes further than Bergson's on some points. Geley recognized Carl du Prel as an intuitive precursor, and Myers (1903) as providing documentation (p. 143). The full range of phenomena presented by Myers could be catalogued as a continuum from normal to supernormal physiology where everything is representation, some usual and other exceptional, conditioned by an essential dynamo-psychism (p. 220). Then the extremity of active ideoplasty, like ectoplasms, would refer to the more general mechanism of passive ideoplasty, which is involved in embryogenesis and physiological functions of the organism (p. 239). Geley based all his claims on one assumption,

> that of an essential dynamo-psychism objectifying in representations and passing, through these representations, from unconscious to conscious (p. 335),

and saw nothing in the science of his time that invalidated it.

In this work, Geley therefore tried an important synthesis based on a few strong ideas, but his remarkable scientific philosophy left little room for analytical accuracy and for a full report of summoned crucial facts (Sudre, 1924). His biological analogies would surely suffer next to current knowledge, and the crucial need to explain the fact of ectoplasmy is no longer credible for a majority of contemporary scholars. It is however important to note that the specificity of its metapsychic approach is this attempt to interpret ectoplasms as emanations not of the afterlife but of life itself, as a more vitalist than spiritualist option. After upsetting all conventional biological theories, and then dying too young before he could better explain his thesis, Geley forced his followers to look elsewhere for support of his theory.

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Notes

[1] Externalization of a polymorphic substance from the body of a medium.
[2] Vitalism is a philosophical tradition for which the living is not reducible to physico-chemical laws. It envisions life as matter animated by a vital force, which will add to the laws of matter and breathe life into matter.
[3] While ideodynamism means the process of physiological realization of an idea, like a hypnotic suggestion, ideoplasty extends this process to the matter itself. The idea is no longer a dependency, a product of matter but, instead, it models matter and gives it its shape and its attributes.

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The Eager Dead: A Study in Haunting by Archie Roy. Book Guild Publishing (Brighton), 2008. 590 pp. £18.50. ISBN 9781846241833.

Psychical research is still dependent on the few academics who, alongside their professional activities, can give time to this challenging subject. This was a viable and productive activity during Victorian times, but has become increasingly difficult today with the demands on academics for mainstream publications as well as teaching and administrative commitments. Professor Archie Roy is an exceptional representative of former times and as such is aptly suited to the task of reviewing the new disclosures about the most enigmatic

challenge, which early days psychical research has left to us.

In addition to having a successful career in astronomy (even to the extent of having an asteroid named after him), Professor Archie Roy is undoubtedly one of the most important persons in contemporary psychical research. He is the founder of the Scottish Society for Psychical Research and a former president of the SPR. In addition to his research papers on the testing of mediums, Archie Roy is the author of two major books in this field: *A Sense of Something Strange* and *Archives of the Mind* which collated the findings from mediumship and spontaneous cases supporting the hypothesis put forward by William James of there being a universal memory repository. Although Archie Roy was in 2004 awarded the Myers Memorial Medal for his outstanding contribution to the field, few readers, and I suspect rather few experimental parapsychologists, will have heard of him. But they should pay attention because he has something important to say in a field that has an acute need to improve its public profile. If parapsychology could make sense of the most challenging and consistent findings, which still lie in the area of case studies, then it might have the theory that is demanded for its entry into neuroscience.

At first look, it may easily be thought that the current book does rather a disservice to the field as far as meeting this goal is concerned. It is a heavy book with a large formatted text, the substance of which concerns intimate letters and papers written between 50 and 100 years ago. The author, whose Foreword is a eulogy of lost Victorian values, would probably agree with me that this does not readily appeal to today's generation with its demand for iPad texts and easily disseminated digital information. Probably only those with a special interest in the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) and in the personal lives of its founders would be willing to follow the 130-year saga to its end. It might have helped if the book had been shortened perhaps by a quarter since the introductory vignettes (which I presume are provided as a means of creating curiosity about the remaining contents) need not have been fully duplicated. The Introduction by Colin Wilson provides a good overview to the intricacies of the cases but a genealogical diagram would have made the journey through the history much easier.

The book is nevertheless of importance since it is both a behind-the-scenes look and an update on the major enigmas of psychical research: the "cross correspondences". The cross correspondences were communications from 1901 until 1932 which were claimed to be set up in a posthumous state as a means of providing evidence of survival after death. The (dead) communicators were said to be using Greek mythology and poetry as a means of proving their identities in the form of allusions, by often using classical sources to provide private details of their lives. The allusions were often sent through several mediums which only when pooled together made sense. Since the communications came

though various mediums, they appeared to indicate that there was some form of intelligent entity or entities steering them.

One of leading contemporary experts in parapsychology and altered states, Charles Tart, suggested that in order to come further in this area we would need to select ten of the most gifted mediums to work with our qualified researchers. In a real sense this is what actually already happened during the period of the cross correspondences, and it is this aspect that makes the book important. The mediums or automatists involved included some the most gifted of the time such as Leonora Piper. Many of them who belonged to highly reputable families were reluctant to publicize their involvement. Alice Fleming, the sister of Rudyard Kipling, wrote under the pen name of Mrs. Holland. One of those most centrally involved in the cross correspondences was Winifred Coombe-Tennant, who produced automatic writing under the pen name Mrs. Willet. Her status in society and politics was such that it was only after her death in 1957 that her role as medium, or sensitive as she preferred to be called, was revealed.

The founding members of the SPR in 1882 were young—the average age was only 33; however, many of the leaders also died young. By the year 1910, the organisation had lost many of its most astute leaders and investigators. Even if it was being claimed that some of them were themselves turning up as communicators, Myers, Sidgwick, James, Gurney, Hodgson, and Podmore were all dead by the beginning of the 1900s. Given the passage of time and the issues that some of the material raises, it is then of value to see if the new information that Archie Roy releases about the Willet/Coombe-Tennant cross correspondences can, by pooling it together what we have learned about the phenomena during the last hundred years, lead us further toward a resolution of the issues.

A fascinating example of cross correspondences is the love story which forms a starting point for the book. This concerned the Balfour family and medium Winifred Coombe-Tennant. Arthur Balfour, who was later the Prime Minister of Great Britain, was a president of the Society for Psychical Research. The unfulfilled love of his life, Mary Lyttelton, had died from typhoid on Palm Sunday and this was an important remembrance day for Arthur Balfour. Apparently unbeknown to anyone, including his brother, Arthur Balfour had had a lock of her hair placed in a silver casket engraved with periwinkles and a verse from *Corinthians*. The series of communications purporting to come from Mary made allusions through poetry and classical works to the hair, the casket and its periwinkles, the *Corinthians* quotation, and to an existing photograph of Mary holding a candlestick. One of the main mediums involved was Coombe-Tennant, but since she knew the Balfours this adds to the difficulty of interpreting the findings. Nevertheless, the details of the casket were said to have been known only to Arthur Balfour and not even to his brother Gerald.

Moreover, the messages came for a period of years through several mediums who were physically and mentally remote from the family. As for the validity of the claims, caskets with lockets of the hair of deceased persons were certainly common during the Victorian and post-Victorian period, so this can hardly be seen in itself as remarkable. However, like many of the cross correspondences which occurred until 1912, when all the details are taken into account, the Palm Sunday case still appears impressive. But impressive of what? Perhaps only of the existence of a process we do not yet understand. Archie Roy's book is in effect a postscript to the story that may just help toward a greater understanding.

The scripts continued until the 1930s, whereupon Jean Balfour, married to Gerald Balfour's son Robert, was chosen to be the custodian of the records. Since the later scripts contained facts of a sensitive nature, they were to be made public only after the deaths of all those concerned. The two Balfour brothers involved, Arthur and Gerald, lived until 1930 and 1945, Gerald Balfour's daughter-in-law, Jean Countess of Balfour, died in 1981, and the archive then was left to her daughter, Lady Alison Kremer, who finally invited Archie Roy to read the material: He had been as deemed the appropriate person to study the archives and publish the extracts that now form part of the book.

The title chosen for the book was meant to reflect the preoccupation of the Victorian SPR researchers: dealing with death and the claims for an afterlife. Concerning the final opinion of the SPR founders on the survival question, Archie Roy notes that the investigators fell naturally into two groups, with Myers, Hodgson, the Balfours, Lodge, Piddington, and Mrs. Sidgwick being among those fully convinced, while Gurney, William James, Richet—and I would add Podmore—remained undecided. It is of interest to note that the SPR of the time included members with a skeptical nature such as Richard Hodgson, Eleanor Sidgwick, and Frank Podmore. As far as true skepticism is concerned, they could have matched today's English practitioners, such as Chris French, Susan Blackmore, and Richard Wiseman, and yet even Frank Podmore became convinced of the reality of ESP. Naturally the questions arise: Are the skeptics of today better at finding normal explanations, or have the phenomena become weaker, or are today's skeptics good at skepticism but less good at being open-minded?

So what do the post-1930 scripts add to the puzzle? The secret that the scripts now reveal is that Coombe-Tennant had an affair with Gerald Balfour and begat a son from him. Potentially scandalous at that time, it was claimed through the automatic scripts that this was part of a grand plan from Myers, Gurney, and Sidgwick to improve the destiny of mankind. The offspring would be a noble person who would then have a major role in creating a new peaceful order. The son, Henry Coombe-Tennant, did attend Eton and then a Trinity College, became a student of the philosopher C. D. Broad, and went on to to

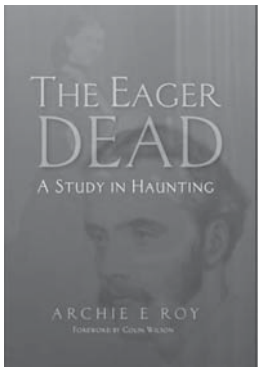
lead a colorful life as a army intelligence officer in the second world war, and finally ended his days as a Catholic priest without fulfilling any of the hopes laid upon him by his mother and the scripts. It is of course tempting to be cynical about this "plan of the spirits" and see it as merely providing a psychological motive or justification for a pregnancy in what would have been regarded if known at the time as a scandalous love affair.

If it is that simple, and added to it the fact that Mrs. Coombe-Tennant may have desperately needed another child to compensate for the early death of her daughter, it therefore unavoidably undermines the legitimacy of the communicators who were central in the cross correspondences. We could of course dismiss this as a minor aberration in the scripts, but the fact is that "the plan" did form a major part of the later cross correspondences. Archie Roy is completely faithful to his task in presenting the post-1930 scripts in an objective way, reserving his own evaluation, which is not dissimilar to the above explanations, for the final chapters. In forming this opinion, it is disconcerting to note how the Zeitgeist of the period in England, fourteen years before Hitler times, was heavily into eugenics so much so that the plan of conceiving the wonder child, Henry Balfour, derived from a belief in psychobiological eugenics. Appropriately, in my opinion, the author quotes Alan Gauld as saying (p. 561) "he would have been far more impressed with the cross correspondences if they had come to an end about 1912".

Nevertheless, the saga did not even end with Coombe-Tennant's demise. Through the mediumship of Geraldine Cummins (1890-1969) and her book *Swan on a Black Sea*, Winifred Coombe-Tennant herself claimed to posthumously continue the communications. Cummins had responded to a request from Henry Coombe-Tennant following his mother's death and produced sufficient factual information about her life to convince him that the communications were on the whole genuine. At the initial stage of this, Coombe-Tennant's identity as Mrs. Willet had not been revealed to the public so it would have difficult to find personal information about her. However, such opportunities may be said to have been remote but they could never be said to have been absent.

How do we now evaluate this material? The author makes no penetrating attempt to do so here in this text perhaps because it is still such an enormous undertaking, and he may have felt it was his duty to present the material in its own right, staying faithful to the original. This is obviously not something that we can go deeply into in a review, but some aspects are worth commenting on.

It is clearly grossly misleading to talk of a hundred years of research in this area, but it is still legitimate to ask if anything has now been learned that could shed light on the remarkable correspondences that occurred in the scripts. One problem concerns how the intimate relations between the parties involved could have created the basis for some of the correspondences. Although there is



nothing to suggest that this suffices as an explanation, it can be surmised that some information could have spread unconsciously. Not only was Coombe-Tennant then involved for a short time with Gerald Balfour but she was married to Fredric Myers' brother-in-law and Eleanor Sidgwick was the sister of Arthur and Gerald Balfour. They nearly all shared a Trinity background. Two other mediums, Helen and Margaret Verrall, were mother and daughter, the mother a lecturer at Cambridge, and they were close friends of the Myers.

On the other hand, some mediums were physically remote from this main group: Mrs. Piper was located in America and Alice Fleming was in India. Previous evaluations of the cross correspondences have stressed how the complexity of the correspondences had a design, which "could not be grasped by any automatist from knowledge of her own scripts but only by someone who had the scripts of the whole group to study" (Salter, 1961:183).

Of course there is the problem of subjective evaluation steered by the characteristic of human consciousness to be biased toward seeing meaningful connections in chance events. This again does not seem to suffice as an explanation for the more outstanding cases such as the Hope, Star, and Browning case, the Lethe case, or the Thantos case (summarised by Saltmarsh, 1938). To use subjective evaluation here would be making the opposite sin of refusing to see something that was staring us in the eyes. For instance, in the Thantos case, within the space of twelve days, the keyword "death" was given by three automatists in three languages in three different countries along with allusive references to the topic.

The early investigators regarded the issue of choosing between ESP from the living or the survival of personality after death. Most neuroscientists today, given the dependency of personality and psychological function on the brain, would reject the latter explanation outright. Yet, in fairness it must be said there are some authorities who have made contemporary reviews of the evidence from psychical research and neuroscience and still conclude that the evidence supports the belief in some form of postmortem consciousness (Fontana, 2005, Van Lommell, 2001).

As far as the ESP explanation is concerned, an ultra-skeptic would maintain that like cases of alleged twin telepathy, it is at worst mere subjective selection at work and at best thought concordance. In the latter case, people with similar backgrounds and similar interests—in that above example it would be "death"—make similar associations. Given the diversity of some of the mediums involved in some of the cross correspondences, this explanation

seems to be again too limited. Nevertheless, some form of control measure is badly needed.

A noteworthy and innovative attempt at this was provided by Christopher Moreman in 2004. In his study, eighteen pseudoscripts were created from five texts randomly chosen as source material from more than 6,000 books. Volunteers were encouraged to use their creativity to find links between the scripts. Thirty points of correspondences were found, but it is in contention as to whether the correspondences here were as striking as the original scripts. What I found to be the most impressive, almost a cosmic joke, was that one of the five texts randomly chosen from the 6,000, belonged to Rudyard Kipling, the brother of "Mrs. Holland", one of the main mediums involved in the cross correspondences. A more well-known "cosmic joke" is that given by Arthur Koestler in his book *Challenge of Chance* (also reviewed in this book on page 351). A schoolmaster had, a few weeks before the invasion of Normandy during World War II and without any idea as to how the words came into head, used five top secret words in making a crossword for *The Daily Telegraph*. These included the names for the American landing beaches, the code name for where the artificial harbor was to be placed, the code name for naval operations, and finally the word *overlord*, the overall name of the plan itself for the D-Day invasion in 1944 (Operation Overlord).

Perhaps a clue to making sense of all this is in another part of the Koestler book, that written by Robert Harvie. Harvie relates how using random number tables to produce targets for an ESP experiment differed enormously in the level of statistical significance from that obtained by merely automatically matching computer digits. It seems as soon as human consciousness is involved, then the laws of chance can become deviant, except of course when the influence of normal consciousness is presumably steered by consensus reality. Again this is not the place to speculate further on this, but if this is true, when several spheres of human consciousness are operating freely, as they were in the cross correspondences, then ESP in the form of meaningful synchronicities in associations would be facilitated.

Actually, in terms of providing the reader with explanations, Archie Roy could have gone further and included in his book the development of the Jamesian cosmic reservoir theory which he recently wrote together with his colleagues Tricia Robertson, Montague Keen, and David Fontana. As yet unpublished, this has the poignant title *That Bourn From Which No Traveller Returns.* The manuscript is a detailed exposition of the archival theory of memory, personality, and states of consciousness that goes further than the earlier book, *Archives of the Mind*. The theory uses an analogy from the downloading of computer programs in order to suggest that memory is located in a personal archive from which individual memories are accessible.

This is also a potentially transpersonal collective memory reservoir, so the concept is used to explain how various dissociated and possession states can sometimes appear to contain fragmental memories of other individuals and to transcend the knowledge of the person concerned. Professor Roy and his colleagues based their theory not only on the classical cross correspondences but also on the best cases of mediumistic communication as well as the attested cases of reincarnation memories and near-death experiences. What makes this modern version of James' theory attractive is that it is empirically testable as to the claims of so-called "survival consciousness". Let us assume a person visits three mediums and receives what appear to be genuine communications through all of them. He then gives an important message to one of them. A minimum survival theory would dictate that the updating would then become evident in the communications through the other two mediums. If the archive is a closed and passive one following the death of the individual, this would obviously not be so.

The theory that memory functions this way may appear to be totally alien to current thinking in cognitive psychology, but some cases of the extraordinary gifts of savants challenge this. Daniel Tammet[1] is an exceptional individual who impressed the neurobiologist V. S. Ramachandran with his abilities. What is almost unique about Tammet is not just his extraordinary savant ability in the areas of mathematics, memory, and languages but that he has as well as these an introspective ability to describe the processes and to communicate socially with others. His description of seeing or feeling the answers rather than calculating them fits closer to a psychic reservoir or archive theory than to conventional memory trace theories. It is possible that some of the material in the cross correspondences might serve to test this memory reservoir theory, but given the vast size of the archive this would be a major undertaking.

This book is recommended as essential reading for a readership that has an interest in the cross correspondences. It should also appeal to those with a more historical interest in how the zeitgeist of the Victorian period gave rise to the hope that psychical research would provide a new foundation for moral values. The central case, the Palm Sunday Case, is indeed a love story and a welcome contrast to today's doom and gloom values. Since this case concerned Arthur Balfour (later British Prime Minister), several allusions were made in it to Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur*. In reflecting on Professor Roy's lament for the passing of the values of this period (but we should not forget that its values also funded the colonialism that erupted in the first World War and in its last battle, the second World War), I thought of a further quotation from Tennyson's poem:

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfills Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

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Note

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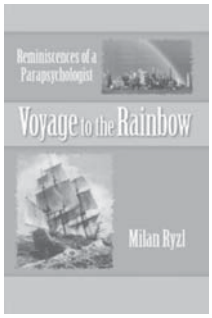
Further Book of Note

Voyage to the Rainbow: Reminiscences of a Parapsychologist by Milan Ryzl. Trafford Publishing, 2007. 274 pp. $22.95. ISBN 97811425112332.



Memoirs are best appreciated by readers of the same generation. Psi researchers who worked the field from the 50s through the 70s will undoubtedly enjoy this self-described “parade of reminiscences” by an urbane, well-traveled, opinionated elder of their circle. A celebrated parapsychologist in Eastern Europe, Milan Ryzl and his family escaped from communist Czechoslovakia in 1967. Ryzl landed in the United States where he worked for a time at J. B. Rhine’s Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University. He invested much of his career in exploring

relationships between psi and hypnosis, with the goal of making practical use of ESP.

But parapsychology is actually an afterthought in this autobiography—the science is dated and occasionally idiosyncratic (e.g., his tenuous theory of "mental impregnation" which he calls one of the three greatest discoveries of his professional career). Instead, the book is a "confession of my life." At the age of 73, he and his wife of almost 50 years divorced, he became alienated from his two sons, and penning his past life helped him retain his stoic optimism. Written in that agitated, stressful period of his life, it includes healthy doses of philosophy, theology, politics, cross-cultural observations, and his wry opinion of born-again George Bush (son). If you're one who eschews iPods and prefers passing an hour between flights sitting on a barstool listening to a garrulous, entertaining stranger spin his life story, Ryzl's your man.

Michael Schmicker
http://www.redroom.com/author/michael-1-schmicker

DVD Review

Something Unknown Is Doing We Don't Know What . . . : A Fascinating Spiritual Journey into the Science beind Psychic Phenomena produced and directed by Renée Scheltema. Telekan, 2009, http://www.somethingunkown.com. DVD, color, 105 min. $25. ASIN B002XFDKUM.

The movie tells the story of one person's quest to sort fact from fiction regarding psychic phenomena. Topics covered are divided into five categories: Telepathy, Clairvoyance, Precognition, Psycho-Kinesis, and Psychic Healing. The film interviews scientists experimenting in each field and allows them to explain the evidence they have uncovered (some are very familiar to SSE audiences: Charles Tart, Dean Radin, Gary Schwartz, Roger Nelson, Rupert Sheldrake, Hal Puthoff, Larry Dossey, Edgar Mitchell Jack Houck, et al.). The amount and type of evidence presented for each category varies. People who have had direct experiences, for example with psychic healing, are also interviewed. While direct experiences are difficult to

scientifically quantify, they definitely contribute to the entertainment value of the film.

For those of you with children, there is one erotic image that is shown briefly, but other than that I find it suitable for any age. One thing I like about it is the film does not try to force its view, it simply presents facts and experiences and lets the viewer decide.

While not as entertaining as films such as *What the Bleep Do We Know* and *The Voice*, which incorporate stronger story lines, this film presents a lot of facts and flows quite well. It did a good job of holding my attention and making me ponder the meaning of it all. Overall, it's an excellent documentary.

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