



GUEST EDITORIAL

New Graduate-Level Education in Parapsychology on the Horizon

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One of my life's ambitions has been the creation of ongoing graduate-level education in parapsychology along the lines that I originally envisioned when I created my own individual and interdisciplinary doctoral major in parapsychology at the University of California at Berkeley, from which I matriculated in 1980. Now, 44 years later, I can say that some first steps have been taken to realize this dream at the California Institute for Human Science (CIHS) located in the San Diego area. CIHS is also a distance learning school with students from all over the world. If you go to the CIHS website (<https://CIHS.edu>), you will see a Master's degree in psychology with a concentration in parapsychology among the offerings. A Doctorate in psychology with a concentration in integral, transpersonal, and positive psychology with a specialization in parapsychology is also one of the offerings. We hope to expand these offerings even further in the future.

CIHS founder—Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama (1925-2015)—was both a scientist and an accomplished yogi. Dr. Motoyama explained that he founded CIHS in 1992 with two principles in mind (Motoyama, n.d.):

1. *Subtle energy can bridge the gap between spirituality and science.* In my opinion, there are two kinds of subtle energy: one which is physical in nature (i.e. ki or chi energy), and the other which is not physical but rather spiritual in nature and is therefore not limited by space or time boundaries.
2. *Education should be a transcendental experience.* Through spiritual practices such as meditation, students should experience the three aspects of the human mind: the unconscious, consciousness, and super-consciousness. It is my wish to continue to create an educational environment at CIHS in which people can scientifically explore the applications of spirituality and subtle energy.

In addition to myself, other faculty in parapsychology include the following: Callum Cooper, who holds two Ph. D.s and is currently supervising doctoral students in parapsychology at the University of Northampton in the United Kingdom; Debra Lynne Katz, Ph.D., who also serves as President of the International Remote Viewing Association; Nancy Zingrone, Ph.D., who has twice served as President of the Parapsychological Association; and Paul Leslie, Ed.D., a clinical psychotherapist. The classes in the programs include the history of psychical research and parapsychology, practical applications of psi abilities, postmortem survival, clinical parapsychology, and remote viewing. Some courses, such as remote viewing, will be academic and experiential, giving students both an objective and subjective understanding of psi phenomena. CIHS is one of the most affordable graduate schools. Furthermore, it is fully accredited by the Western

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Association for Schools and Colleges. These are the first graduate degree-granting programs, specifically in parapsychology, in the United States since the master's degree offering at John F. Kennedy University (where I was then an instructor) closed in the early 1980s.

Parapsychology is a controversial field. I'm sad to report that Wikipedia still refers to parapsychology as a "pseudoscience." This is contradicted by the simple fact that, since 1969, the Parapsychological Association, the professional organization of parapsychologists, has been an affiliate organization of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. This occurred after a lengthy discussion and a vote of the board and constituent members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It represents an acknowledgment that the methods used by parapsychologists are scientifically valid and appropriate.

Parapsychological studies basically fall into two categories: The most common is *extrasensory perception*, sometimes called anomalous cognition or non-local perception, i.e., the acquisition of information that could not be known through psychological sense perception. The second category is known as *psychokinesis* or non-local perturbation, i.e., consciousness directly affecting matter, including therapeutic intention/healing. Today, six stabilized parapsychological protocols are used in laboratories around the world to explore these two categories of phenomena.¹ Under rigorous conditions, each of these six has independently produced Six Sigma results. Six sigma can occur by chance only one time in a billion.

As far back as the mid-90s, after studying the data from just one of these four protocols, remote viewing, stalwart skeptic University of Oregon psychology professor Ray Hyman (1995) had to grudgingly admit, "...the experiments [being assessed] were free of the methodological weaknesses that plagued the early . . . research . . . the . . . experiments appear to be free of the more obvious and better-known flaws that can invalidate the results of parapsychological investigations. We agree that the effect sizes reported... are too large and consistent to be dismissed as statistical flukes" (pp. 71 to 72). In each case, there is also a large enough body of research from enough different institutions, done by enough researchers, that we have some idea of the process and how successful it can be.

Remote Viewing

A double- or triple-blind protocol in which a participant is given a task that can only be accomplished through non-local perception, the acquisition of information that could not be known with the normal physi-

ological senses because of shielding by time or space or both. Sitting in a room 2,000 miles away, in answer to the question, "Please describe the current circumstances and conditions of the target couple." You couldn't know they were, at that moment, standing beneath a waterfall in the mountains of Colombia standing next to the water surrounded by greenery, watching two flying parrots. But non-local perception can and has provided just such information many thousands of times under conditions that even skeptics have had to acknowledge are impeccable (Tressoldi, 2011; Tressoldi & Katz, 2023).

Ganzfeld

A protocol similar in intent to remote viewing in which an individual in a state of sensory deprivation provides verifiable information about film clips being shown at another location (Williams, 2011).

Presentiment

A measurable psychophysical response that occurs before actual stimulation, such as the dilation of a participant's pupils while staring at a monitor screen before the pictures appear (Radin, 2004). Or it is a change in brain function before a noise is heard (Mossbridge et al., 2012).

Retrocognition/Recognition

Many protocols also involve time dislocation to the past or future to be successful. It is routine today to do remote viewing experiments in which the session data are collected and judged against a randomly chosen target set before the target in that set is randomly selected.

Random Event/Number Generator (REG/RNG) Influence

The REG protocol actually consists of two major protocols. The first constitutes studies in labs where an individual intends to affect the performance of a physical system, such as a random quantum mechanical random event generator (Bösch et al., 2006).

Global Consciousness Project

The second REG protocol is the Global Consciousness Project. Psychologist Roger Nelson of the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research group understood the implications of individuals affecting REGs. Could it be possible that a mass of people having an individual but linked experience, some major emotionally-charged world event, collectively produce a non-local perturbation effect on a constantly running coordinated network of computer-linked RNGs? A measure of consciousness linked non-

locally expressing itself as social awareness—something like the world’s reaction to the death of Princess Diana in a car accident or the Japanese tsunami? The available evidence certainly suggests that subtle interactions link us with each other and the Earth. When human consciousness becomes coherent and synchronized, the behavior of random systems may change. Quantum event-based random number generators (RNGs) produce completely unpredictable sequences of zeroes and ones. But when a great event synchronizes the feelings of millions of people, our network of RNGs becomes subtly structured. The probability is less than one in a billion that the effect is due to chance (Nelson & Bancel, 2011; Nelson et al., 2002).

These hard-earned experimental findings and meta-analyses are the results of decades of scientific research. Nevertheless, parapsychology is more than a science. Like many other disciplines involving human performance, parapsychology involves experimental research, field studies, practical applications, and theoretical work. CIHS courses will necessarily cover all of these. In addition to its psychology program, where parapsychology resides, CIHS has the noetic sciences program, in which they’re also exploring facets of the paranormal – including Ufology and contact with ostensible non-human intelligence. Parapsychology students will be able to take any of the electives that are offered in noetic sciences, transpersonal psychology, and the other clinical psychology tracks as well.

Prospective students often wonder what they can do with a degree in parapsychology. It’s not like getting a degree in mathematics or engineering or the biological sciences, where one can expect a high-paying job waiting for you upon graduation. Employment opportunities do exist, but they’re relatively rare. At CIHS, we have a philosophy of preparing students for careers as public intellectuals (which is what I have done, myself, after having earned a doctoral degree in parapsychology). This entails writing and speaking skills. But a degree program in parapsychology should also foster greater intellectual humility, which can certainly help to produce more reflective and rigorous thinkers across the physical, biomedical, and social sciences.

There is a hunger in the population and mainstream academia for valid information about the ‘paranormal.’ Surveys consistently show that most people report having had paranormal experiences. The research in parapsychology suggests that all conscious persons have the potential for psychic functioning. So, the possibilities are sky-high for students who want to devote themselves to this most fascinating of all fields.

ENDNOTE

¹ Special thanks to Stephan A. Schwartz, who has graciously permitted me to include material he developed (Schwartz, 2015) for the discussion herein about areas of parapsychological research attaining Six Sigma status.

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