

# Parapsychology

## Key Research Findings for Paranormal Investigators



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# Parapsychology

- ▶ **Studies how the mind can interact with other minds, the world around it, & possibly survive bodily death.**
- ▶ **ESP**
  - **For example:** telepathy, clairvoyance, clairsentience, remote viewing, channeling, precognition, OBEs.
- ▶ **Mind-Matter Interaction (Psychokinesis/PK)**
  - **For example:** Fire-walking, Metal-bending, psychic healing, thoughtography, levitation, materialization, apports, poltergeist phenomena (recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis).
- ▶ **Survival of Bodily Death**
  - **For example:** NDEs, apparitions, reincarnation, and forms of ESP and MMI that may involve the surviving spirits of humans, such as EVP, ITC, & sources for mediums.

## Basic Terms

- ▶ **Psi** is a general term for ESP & MMI.
- ▶ **Super-ESP** is the ability to know anything, anywhere, at any time (true with CRV).
- ▶ ESP traditionally thought of as a "passive," or receptive process, and MMI as "active."
- ▶ Parapsychologists have argued for over 50 years whether ESP and MMI differ or are the same thing called by two different names.
- ▶ **Referring to ESP/MMI together as psi gets around this problem.**

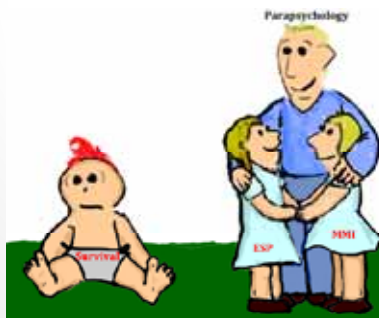
## Is there evidence for survival?



## Evidence of Survival

- ▶ Parapsychology got started as a science because of an interest in whether we survive death of the body.
- ▶ There are two parts to the question of whether we survive:
  1. Do we in some way survive the death of our bodies?
  2. Does some aspect of our personality survive?

## Why is Survival Now the Unwanted Step-Child of Parapsychology?



The answer is because there is no way to determine which of two competing hypotheses is correct: super ESP vs. Survival.

## Super-ESP vs. Survival

- ▶ Parapsychologist originally thought that only the dead could do MMI, and human ESP was limited. *We now know this is wrong.*
- ▶ Super-ESP and human MMI can account for virtually **all** survival research findings.
- ▶ **There is no way to determine whether the source of ANYTHING is the result of human psi or from those in spirit** – whether information or phenomena.
- ▶ This has discouraged most parapsychologists from pursuing survival research.

## Reincarnation

- ▶ **Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation:** Ian Stevenson studied young children with spontaneous recall of a past life. To minimize normal ways they could have gotten this info, he focused those who lived in isolated areas, without good communication, travel, or media access.
  - Often knew specific details that could be verified.
  - Children could ID people in photos whom they hadn't met.
  - Some had birth marks associated with their manners of death
  - Some had a carry over of ability, such as speaking adult forms of an entire other language.
- ▶ **This is some of the strongest evidence we have that some aspect of personality continues after death.**

- ▶ Spontaneous reports of past lives occur in all cultures around the world.



## Near-Death Experiences

- ▶ **Near-Death Experiences:**
  - Can bring back verifiable information of events that happened away from the body while they were "dead."
  - **NDEs show cultural variations.** Not everyone sees the tunnel of light. Some cross a bridge.
- ▶ **Out of Body Experiences**
  - Occur in non-survival situations
  - Have unique characteristics that are *not* duplicated by artificially stimulating the brain.
  - May be one of the better pieces of evidence that NDEs are not simply a by-product of the brain being starved of oxygen.

## What About...

- ▶ Spontaneous Events?
- ▶ Poltergeists?
- ▶ Channeled Information?
- ▶ Table tipping (séances)?
- ▶ Haunting Investigations?
- ▶ Anomalous Photos?
- ▶ EVP Research?

## Spontaneous Events

- ▶ Louisa Rhine performed literature reviews of cases sent to her involving spontaneous ESP and MMI. These sometimes included apparitions of people in mortal danger or just after death. She found:
  - **ESP and MMI events are meaningful.** (They were often the only way to let someone know what was happening elsewhere.)
  - Apparitions and MMI are more apt to occur in crisis situations.
  - Experiences typically **involve people who are emotionally close to you.**

## Poltergeist Case Studies

- ▶ The majority of the time the MMI is caused by a living individual or group – not a ghost.
- ▶ Activity can include apparitions created by the agent.
- ▶ Typically involves repressed emotions (this is the only way that the feelings can be expressed).
- ▶ **The events have meaning.** Understanding the when, where, and what will often tell you who & why.
- ▶ Events stop when the agent takes responsibility.
- ▶ May involve unconscious fraud.
- ▶ **Can be re-triggered using hypnosis.**

## Experiential Research

- ▶ **The PK Zone:** Looked at MMI experiences of all types, both spontaneous and intentional, including poltergeist activity. It found:
  - Spontaneous MMI occurs most often in situations with high emotion.
  - Intentional MMI is more apt to emphasize an ASC.
  - **MMI fulfills unconscious needs.**
  - Always associated with **focused awareness** – but it may not be focused on the target!
  - May involve the perception of time having been altered.

## Channeled Literature

- ▶ Is not considered proof even when accurate and verifiable information is transmitted because of the possibility of super-ESP.
- ▶ **Suicide: What Really Happens in the Afterlife?** is a classic literature review of channeled material.
  - Emotional bonds continue after death
  - Spirits can have adjustment problems.
  - **The dead may perform poltergeist activity for the same reasons as the living --because spirits are feeling very emotional and/or have no other means by which to communicate a message .**

## Who's responsible for MMI?





## Group Sitter Studies

Kenneth Batchelder studied ordinary folks sitting around a table like old time physical séances. He felt that three things block MMI:

- ▶ **Belief:** Doubt can affect public success.
- ▶ **Ownership Resistance:** People are often reluctant to take responsibility for their ability to effect matter. (Explains poltergeist activity stopping when they take responsibility for it.)
- ▶ **Witness Inhibition:** People often feel disturbed when witnessing displays of MMI, regardless of the source (i.e. they freak out).

His solution to get around these problems was to use a faked event to "prime the pump."

## Sitter Studies Show:

- ▶ **Ordinary people can do MMI** if you eliminate their resistance to it.
- ▶ **FAKING an event can allow REAL phenomena** to follow.
- ▶ **Just because fraud may be responsible for some of the events in an investigation, it does NOT mean that everything that occurs will be fraud.** Every piece of data must be analyzed based on its own merits.

## Haunting Investigations

- ▶ Often combines the use of equipment with surveys of “blind” participants marking where they experience things as “haunted.” This may later be compared with experiences of professional psychics and/or physical findings.
- ▶ **Is not proof of survival** because of “super-ESP,” human MMI and possibility it is merely data stored by the environment (called place memory).
- ▶ **GMF** levels are inversely associated with psychic phenomena (including spirit lights).
- ▶ **Magnetic fields** cannot fully account for hauntings.

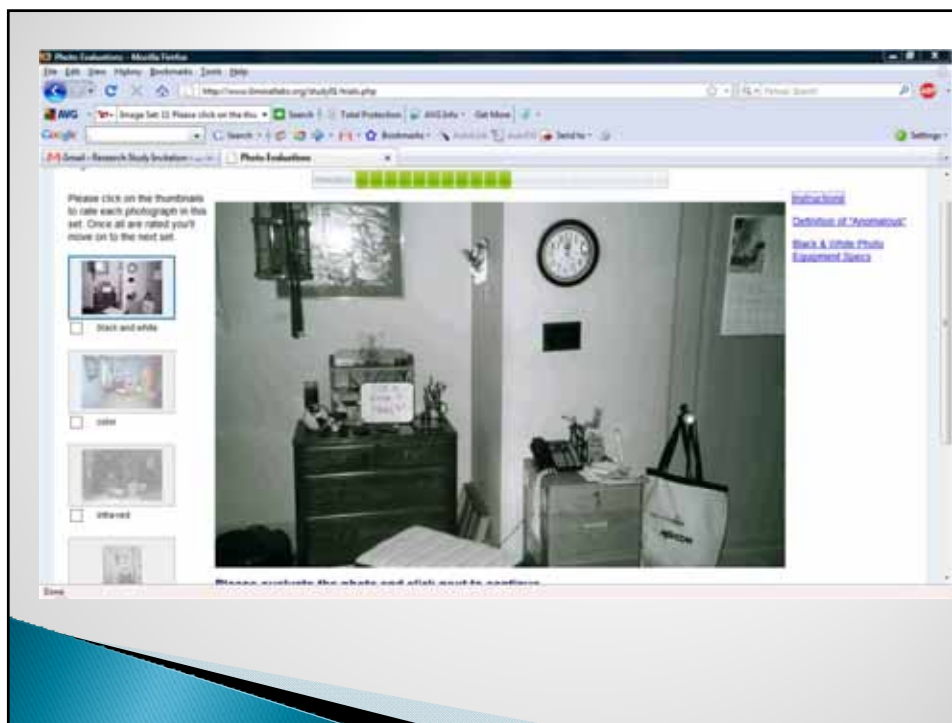
## The evaluation of photographic anomalies

Slides courtesy of  
Annalisa M. Ventola & Devin B. Terhune  
Lund University

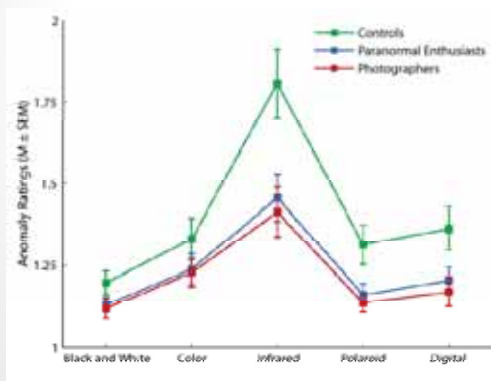
Presented at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Parapsychological  
Association Convention, August 2009

## Design

- ▶ Mixed factorial design involving an internet survey
- ▶ Participant groups
  - Professional photographers, paranormal enthusiasts, and controls (no haunting investigation experience)
- ▶ Context
  - Informed v. uninformed (i.e. knew it involved haunting)
- ▶ Sites where the photos were taken
  - Haunt (active areas), haunt (inactive areas) and control house (next door)
- ▶ Media type
  - Black-and-white, color, digital, infrared, and Polaroid

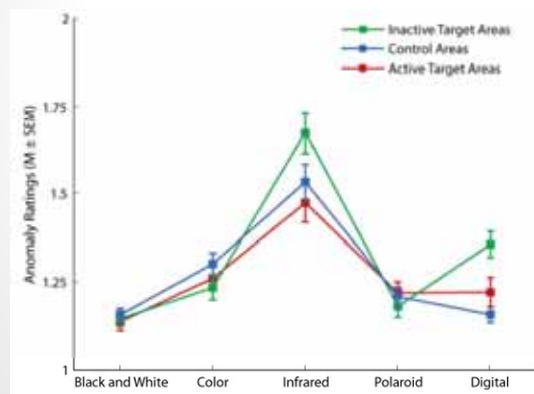


## Anomaly Rating Results



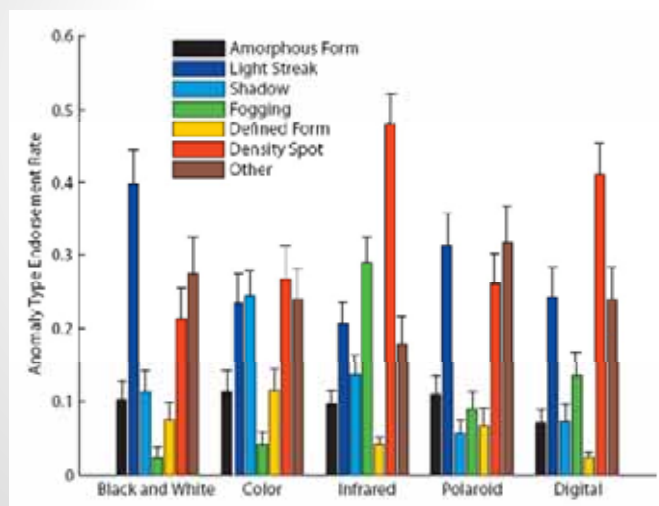
Note: The greater the years of photography experience a person had, the less likely they were to rate images as anomalous.

## More Anomaly Rating Results



Actively haunted areas had **lower** anomaly ratings than inactive areas for infrared and digital images.

## Anomaly Types



## Photo Anomalies

- ▶ **Density spots** (AKA 'orbs') mostly seen in digital and infrared photos.
- ▶ **Light streaks** mostly seen in black and white and Polaroid's.
- ▶ **Shadowing** mostly seen in color photos.
- ▶ **Fogging** seen in infrared.
- ▶ Amorphous forms, defined forms and the 'other' category were relatively common across media types.

## Findings

- ▶ No context effect.
- ▶ **None of the image formats or anomalies accurately indicated the haunted parts of the site, and the anomalies of digital and infrared film were actually WORSE.**
- ▶ Infrared prints had the highest anomalous ratings (inappropriately so).
  - We are unfamiliar with its normal artifacts.
  - There may be an inaccurate belief that infrared is better at capturing anomalous phenomena.
  - More susceptible to poor photographic technique and mishandling.

## EVP Research

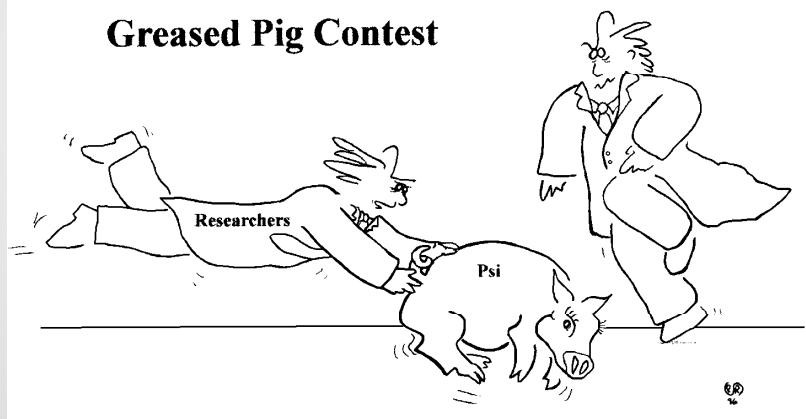
- ▶ **EVP can occur inside of sound-proofed Faraday cages** (which block radio & cell phone signals).
- ▶ **EVP have particular speech and sound characteristics.**
- ▶ When we hear a response (whether an EVP utterance or human speech), it takes us a moment to make sense of that sound.
- ▶ That period of unknowingness is one of tension as we seek through our mental database for a recognizable match.
- ▶ The more important it is to us to know the answer, the greater the tension during this data seeking.

## EVP Research

- ▶ **Feed-forward expectancy effect:** Every person expects a given set of answers, with which they match vague utterances (whether spoken by the living or the dead). Varied comprehensions of EVP speech is due to the presence of variable expectations.
- ▶ The increase in themed responses may be the result of restricted expectation.
- ▶ **For EVPs, what you hear may be determined by your own expectations (including if you expect to hear nothing).**

## Other Important Research

### Greased Pig Contest



## Established Effects

- ▶ **Decline Effect:** Effects tend to diminish with time (may be due to boredom, tiredness, etc.)
- ▶ **Target Type:** It is easiest to succeed with targets that are emotionally "close" to you, "likeable", or important to your *unconscious* mind.
- ▶ The conscious mind does need not know how to do something to succeed at a hidden task.
- ▶ **What you can or cannot do may be more a result of what interests you (if only on an UNCONSCIOUS level) than what your potential is!**

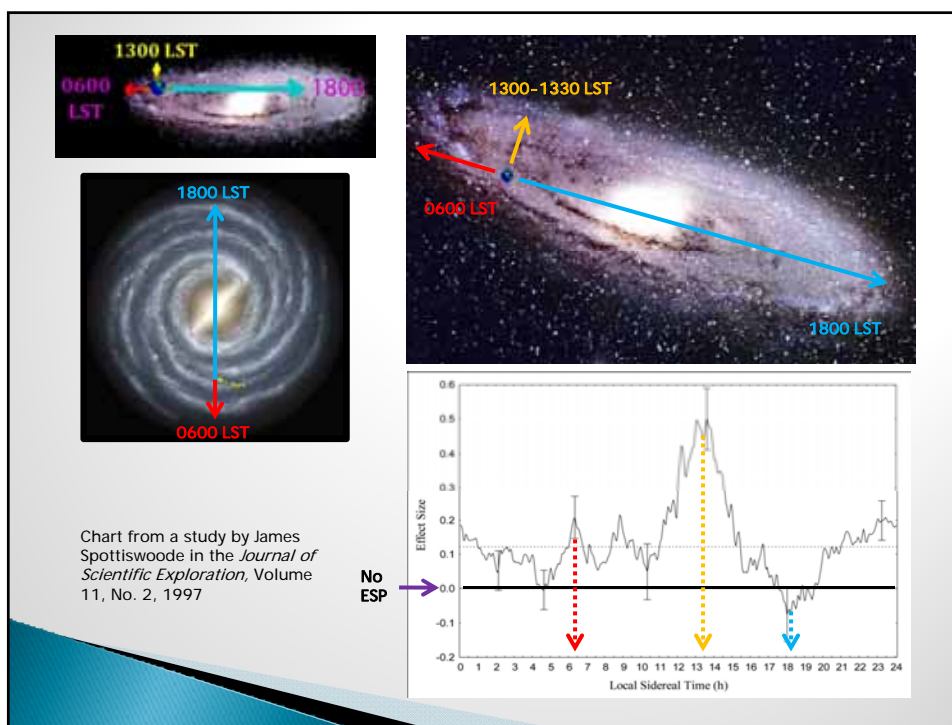
## Altered States are Important

- ▶ There are been a great many studies looking at altered states, such as those of partial sensory deprivation (Ganzfeld), meditation, hypnosis, and dreaming. These all show **psychic abilities are enhanced in altered states of consciousness**. This includes the cusp of sleep.
- ▶ The fact that more ghost activity gets reported at night may be because:
  - **There is a higher signal to noise ratio** (less going on to distract you)
  - **People are more sensitive to psychic information when tired, dreaming, or on the edge of sleep.**



## Physical Factors

- ▶ **Local Sidereal Time (LST)** is a term used by astronomers. A sidereal day is the time it takes for a particular star to travel around and reach same position in the sky (23 hours, 56 minutes, and 4.1 seconds). It only matches clock time once a year at the autumn equinox.
- ▶ **LST tells us how the planet is oriented relative to the stars in the Milky Way Galaxy.**
- ▶ In over 20 years of data from labs around the world, there is a repeated **pattern of a 300% increase in ESP hit rate at about 1300-1330 LST**, and a 0% hit rate (i.e. **zero success**) with ESP at around **1800-1930 LST**. (Note: We also have individual personal biorhythms that can effect our results.)



## The Sheep–Goat Effect

- ▶ **Sheep:** Psi-believers will tend to use their abilities for psi-hitting (i.e. success).



- ▶ **Goats:** Disbelievers in psi will use it for psi-missing (i.e. failure).



## Experimenter Effect

- ▶ **Robert Rosenthal:** Found in the 1960s that the experimenter is a key aspect of any experiment and may determine its success or failure.
- ▶ *Not sloppy technique or fraud.*
- ▶ Unintended effects which create a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- ▶ Occurs through subtle processes of communication between the experimenter and the human or animal research subject.

## Experimenter Effect

- ▶ Parapsychology research has found that this effect can include an experimenter's own psychic abilities, trying to fulfill an often unconscious desire for a given outcome!
- ▶ For sceptical experimenters, this means failure to get results. For believers, this means successful psi research.
- ▶ **This is why it is *critical* that studies get repeated by other experimenters before the results are accepted at face value.**

## We know when we're being watched

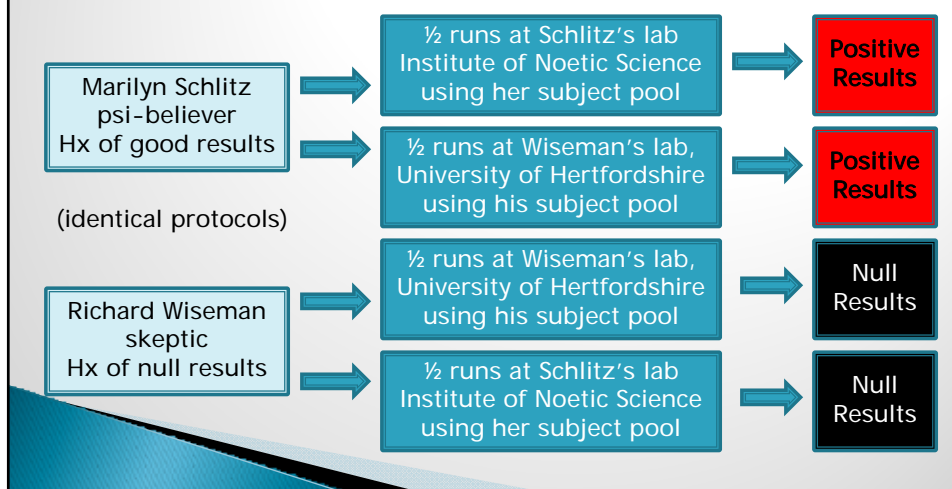
- ▶ **Staring Studies** measure physiological variables, such as skin resistance and show that we know on an unconscious level when we are being stared at.



**We might also know when spirits are watching us.**

## Experimenter Effect

- ▶ **Staring Studies** show the importance of the experimenter effect.

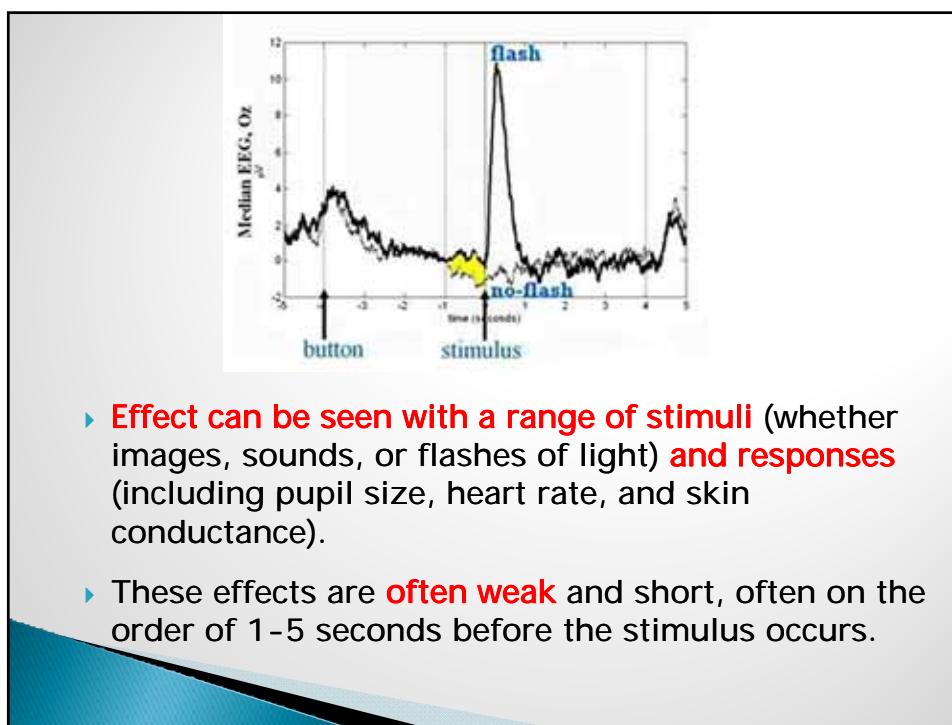
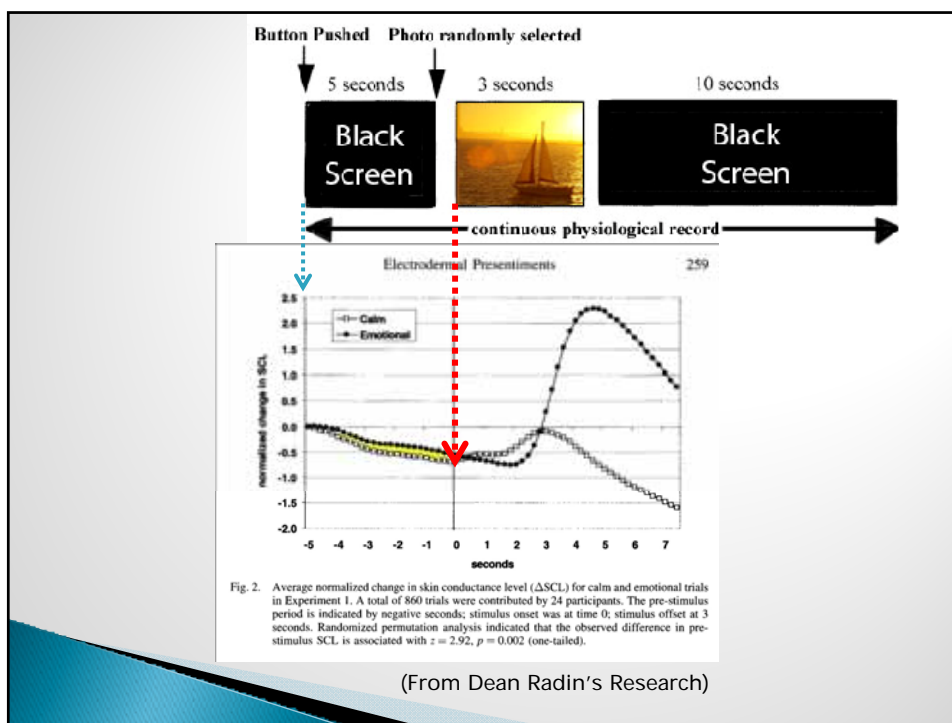


## Presentiment Studies

- ▶ This is a major ongoing area of research, which looks at **unconscious precognition**.

1. The participant pushes a button to start the trial.
  2. The computer randomly picks a photo (either calm or arousing, whether violent, erotic, or food).
  3. The photo is shown.
  4. There is a recovery phase.
- Physiological measurement occurs from beginning to end.





## What Have We Learned?

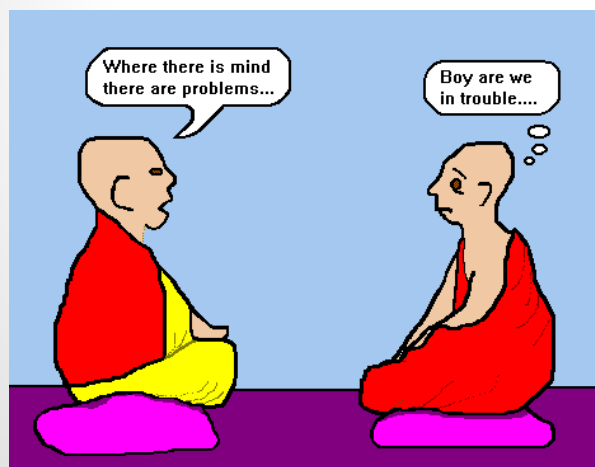
- ▶ Presentiment studies take the conscious mind and participant fraud out of the equation.
- ▶ **It proves precognition.** The autonomic nervous system (sometimes combined with the sympathetic nervous system) shows an effect **1-5 seconds before a stimulus** appears.
- ▶ Presentiment may also occur in your investigations if you look for it.

## Why Would This Matter?



**Unconscious precognition gives you an edge in survival. It prepares you for what is coming.**

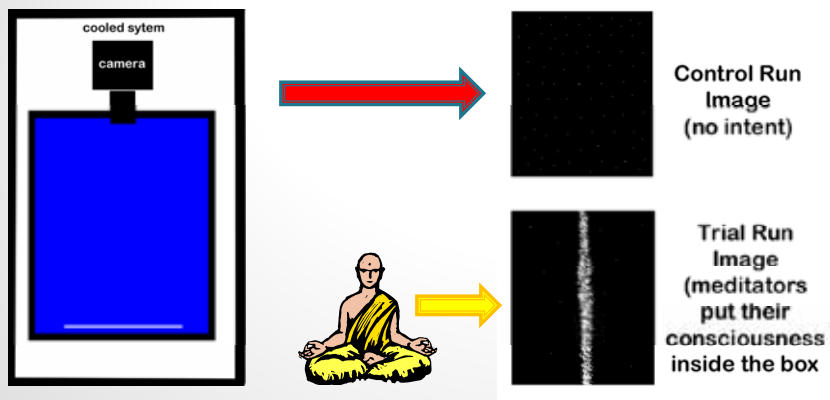
## Consciousness Can Effect Matter



## Cosmic Rays & Entropy

- ▶ Gary Schwartz (*The Afterlife Experiments*) has shifted from work with mediums to studying cosmic/gamma rays. This is extremely high frequency energy, which normally occurs in a random pattern.
- ▶ Used a low light CCD camera system cooled to -77 degrees pointed into a sealed metal chamber, with only a white sheet of paper inside.
- ▶ Room was also temperature controlled and light tight.
- ▶ 30 minute exposure times with and without meditators.

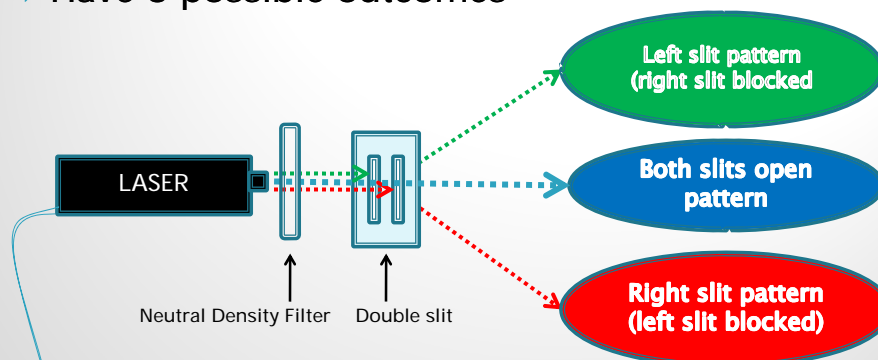
## Entropy is decreased?



Consciousness effect what gets seen on photos and may be able to decrease entropy.

## Double Slit Experiments

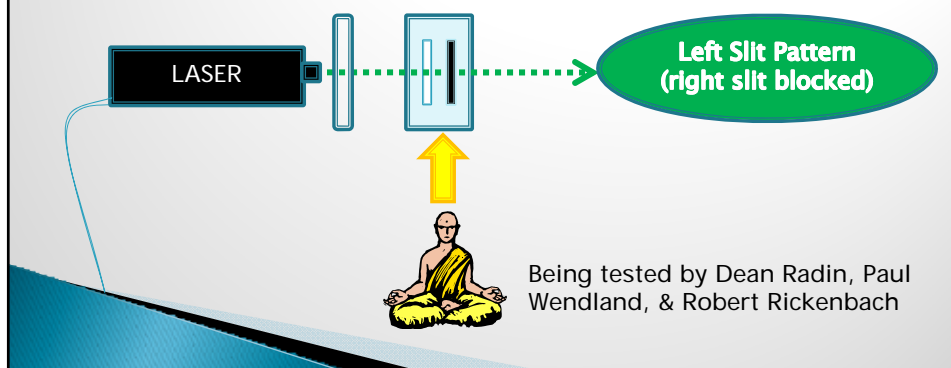
- ▶ Have looked at consciousness and time.
- ▶ Have 3 possible outcomes





## Double Slit Experiments

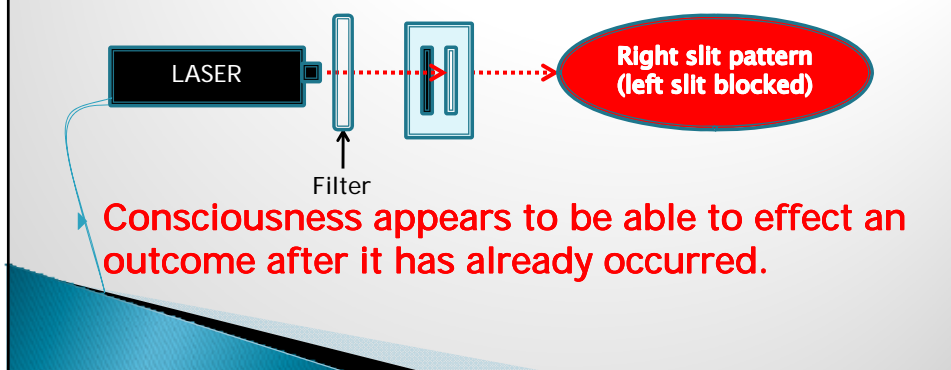
- ▶ Have looked at consciousness and time.
- ▶ Meditators focusing on putting their consciousness inside a slit appear to block photos from going through it.



## Retro-causal

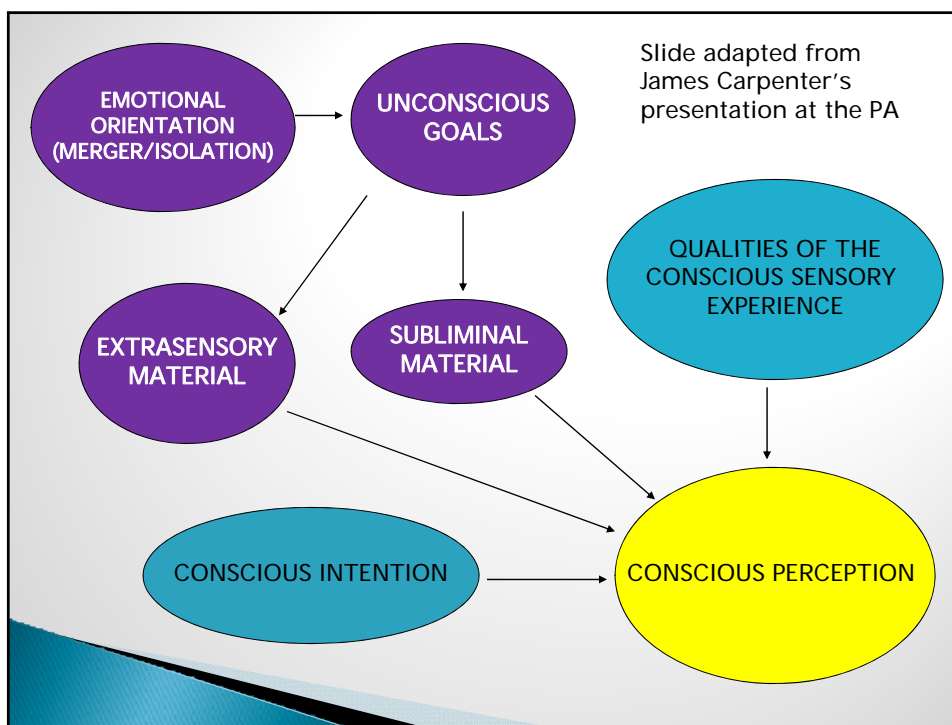


- ▶ Where this gets interesting is with effects that seem to go backward in time.
- ▶ A meditator focuses on blocking one slit after the photon has already passed through.



## Emerging Theories

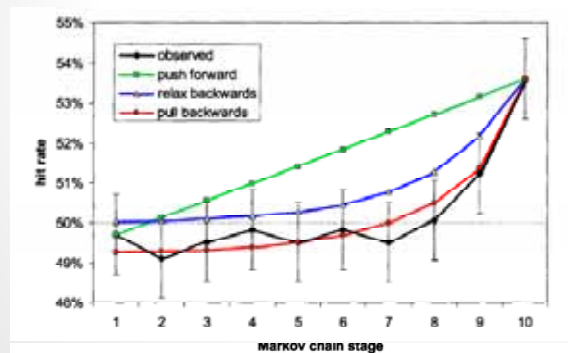
- ▶ **First Sight Theory** proposes that **we use psychic information all the time**. It gets a “first look” at everything.
- ▶ The purpose of the unconscious mind is **NOT** to acquire psychic information, but to **block out irrelevant psychic information**.
- ▶ **We use this information unconsciously to navigate through life**, drawing expected or unconsciously desired experiences towards us. I would add we also manipulate our environment in ongoing subtle ways through MMI.



## MMI Theory

- ▶ Dean Radin notes four types of explanations for the kind of MMI seen in REG/RNG studies. They are:
  1. **Selective reporting of random results** (i.e. the “file drawer effect” - not supported by data)
  2. **Causal moving forward through time.** MMI ‘pushes’ the target to conform with an intention.
  3. **Precognition** (Decision Augmentation Theory) says we use future information to know when to do our studies to get the results we want. It is a passive model for a retro causal effect.
  4. **Retro-MMI** says that the target system is “pulled” towards a future goal that has been set in the present.

Using mathematical models, Radin found a retro-causal model came closest to fitting the real data.



Present intentions create a future result that can “pull” us toward it. (May be how “The Secret” works.)

## Emerging Concepts

- ▶ **Time** is a hot topic now in a number of fields, including physics, philosophy, and parapsychology.
- ▶ Science knows that gravity affects time. Given the mathematical formula, the reverse is also true. **If you can use consciousness to alter time, you will also affect gravity.** Many people describe an alteration in time during MMI events. This could explain levitation.
- ▶ **Entropy** - the second law of thermodynamics is being called into question. Entropy should not move in only one direction.

## Untapped Areas of Research

- ▶ **Batteries not working** during MMI
  - Is this a partial or temporary discharge?
  - No discharge at all, but a dampening field effect?
  - Could it be related to what is reported with UFOs?
- ▶ **Equipment malfunction** in haunted locations
  - Everyone reports it.
  - Is it our own MMI to let us know something is going on?
  - Is it deliberate and specific to one or a few item(s)?
  - Is it a general field effect?
  - Is it related to what happens with batteries?

## Take Home Messages

- ◆ **Consciousness has a documented effect on matter.** In addition to countless RNG/REG, dice, healing studies, ball cascade arrays, double slit photon experiments, etc., it may be able to reverse entropy (photography of cosmic rays) and affect time (or at least go backward as well as forward).
- ◆ **Computers and electronic equipment are a favorite targets for psi experiments.** Most of these successful tests involve ordinary folks (not particularly psychic). Electronics are easy to manipulate.

## Take Home Messages

- ◆ **Everyone can do ESP and MMI,** even if it is weak and non conscious.
- ◆ **How you use your ability, depends on what you want to accomplish - consciously or unconsciously .** For skeptics, this can mean psi-missing. For believers, it can mean getting results or findings.
- ◆ **You don't need to know anything about a device to manipulate it with MMI.** All you need to succeed is UNCONSCIOUS intention. The conscious mind does NOT need to be involved. There can also be a field effect, where items near the target may also be impacted.

## Final Take Home Messages

- ◆ **At this point in time, equipment by itself cannot provide proof of ghosts.** This is because there is no way to prove who is the source of the readings.
- ◆ **Even if the living are responsible for their own equipment readings** (whether through artifact or MMI), it does NOT mean **a ghost may not also be present.**
- ◆ **Your subjective experiences are a critical part of any investigation.** They provide personal meaning and insight.



**You may be the one creating your own findings with equipment – not the ghosts.**

## Your Findings in Context

- ▶ Does this mean equipment findings are worthless? **NO!**
- ▶ **Regardless of their source (living or dead) your findings can indicate psi activity and/or physical/energetic phenomena we do not yet fully understand.**
- ▶ This is USEFUL. However, be careful about what you claim and keep an open mind about the precise nature of the meaning of your results.
- ▶ The experimenter effect means independent replication of findings is critical.

## Your Findings in Context

- ▶ **At this point, equipment findings do not represent proof of ghosts any more than subjective experiences do.**
- ▶ This is the conundrum that frustrates and stymies parapsychologists today.
- ▶ Changes in science (particularly physics) mean there is hope this will change.
- ▶ Publishing your results in journals where parapsychologists and others read them benefits everyone.

## To learn more:

- ▶ **The Conscious Universe** by Dean Radin
- ▶ **The PK Zone** by Pamela Heath
- ▶ **Handbook to Parapsychology** by B. Wolman
- ▶ [www.parapsych.org](http://www.parapsych.org)
- ▶ Online masters & doctorate degrees in Parapsychology are now offered with Ian Hume from Coventry University at [www.coventry.ac.uk](http://www.coventry.ac.uk)

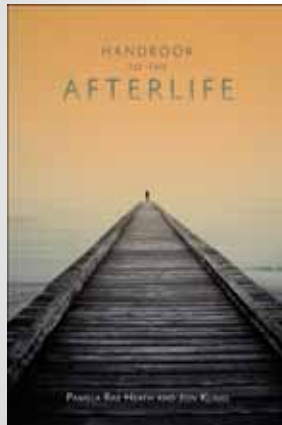
## Online Parapsychology Library

[www.lexscien.org/lexscien/index.jsp](http://www.lexscien.org/lexscien/index.jsp)

- ▶ Journal of the Society for Psychical Research (1884-2008)
- ▶ Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (1882-2008)
- ▶ Journal of Parapsychology (1937-2003)
- ▶ Research in Parapsychology (1972-1993)
- ▶ Journal of Scientific Exploration (1987-2008)
- ▶ European Journal of Parapsychology (1975-2004)
- ▶ Revue Métapsychique (coming soon)
- ▶ Journal of Exceptional Human Experience (coming soon)
- ▶ Parapsychology Abstracts International (coming soon)
- ▶ Psi Researcher / Paranormal Review (1991-2006)
- ▶ Classic books
  - *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, by Myers (1903)
  - *Phantasms of the Living, Volumes 1 & 2* by Gurney, Myers, & Podmore (1886)
  - *Supernormal Faculties in Man*, Osty (1923)



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## **Handbook to the Afterlife**

By Pamela Heath and Jon Klimo

From North Atlantic Books

April 20, 2010

Covers:

1. Religious and secular beliefs about the afterlife
2. Developmental stages spirits go through in the afterlife
3. Adjustment problems
4. How spirits can be helped
5. Ways to make contact with the dead.