

ASAP

The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena

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Investigators' e-Bulletin



AAI & Groups Co-ordinators

Dear AAI Members,

Unfortunately Andrew Homer had a serious fire at his house recently (above photograph) however he has fortunately **escaped physically unharmed** ruling out spontaneous human combustion! He has lost all his possessions but is gradually putting the pieces back together.

Contact the investigations team:

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CURRENT CASES

Bill Eyre

- David Taylor and colleagues from Parasearch have been busy with haunting investigations, scientific experiments and photographic examinations. They have conducted a further vigil at a 75 year old swimming centre in the West Midlands and David has submitted a report, which reveals that over the years, apparitions of, and the voices of, various characters have been reported. These include children, a man in a green uniform, an American airman, a spiv type character, a German airman and an Italian prisoner of war. One of the investigators involved also saw an apparition. Partly because of the type of machinery present in the tunnels under the swimming pool and the deep resonance recorded from this, infrasound creating visual and auditory hallucinations was suspected as being a possible cause of the phenomena. George Gregg and Andrew Homer organised, and documented the results of, a specific experiment designed to test this hypothesis. However, although infrasound was detected in some areas and unusual experiences were reported in various areas by the experiment participants, no correlation was found between the areas of infrasound occurrence and the areas of unusual experience, thus indicating that infrasound is unlikely to be cause of the phenomena at these particular premises. Running such an experiment is exactly the type of scientific approach that ASSAP recommends should be adopted by other AAI's.

More Current Cases

- The ghost image appearing on a photograph taken on the North Yorkshire Moors has now been examined in detail by five photographic experts. David reports that the image is more than likely a digitally manipulated image, although it is possible that the photographer merely enhanced the image to make it more visible.
- A case in Shropshire had been reported to ASSAP, involving objects being moved, a door being locked and apparitions being seen, but although George tried to arrange an investigation, unfortunately the client decided to bring someone in to 'remove the ghost' instead of permitting a scientific investigation. This sort of scenario does happen every so often, where the client has a preconceived idea that ghosts or spirits must be responsible and is more interested in stopping the phenomena than in working with an organisation like ours to try to understand what the real explanation for the phenomena is. Whilst this is regrettable, clearly it would be unethical for ASSAP to impose itself on such clients if the client's preference is to back off from an investigation.
- George has, however, undertaken a more successful investigation in Shropshire, involving holding a vigil at a reputedly haunted theatre.
- In Jean Porter's case of the lady in Derbyshire having strange night-time effects, the client reported to ASSAP that despite phenomena reducing for a while as a result of her bringing mediums in, experiences had restarted and so she asked ASSAP to become involved once more. Jean, together with Bill Eyre, therefore spent some time one night at her flat, to compare their experiences with the clients. Despite the client claiming that she was regularly seeing and feeling unexplained incidents at the time of night the investigators were there, she actually experienced very little herself that particular night and the investigators experienced nothing of note. It was felt that the lady had possibly been exaggerating incidents owing to an (unacknowledged) feeling of loneliness and that a relative lack of contact with the outside World caused her to concentrate too much on what should have been regarded as minor effects taking place in her flat.
- During Kevin Parkin's interview with a Derbyshire couple, it became clear that various members of the family had seen apparitions, felt something tugging at their clothes, heard noises that could not be accounted for and seen toys flying through the air. Although Kevin felt that a vigil would benefit the investigation, unfortunately so far the client has not been willing to commit to a date for one to be held.

More Current Cases

- Simon Royce-Dexter has interviewed a lady in Derbyshire who has reported poltergeist phenomena and a vigil has been organised.
- A couple in Derbyshire have reported unexplained black objects moving (apparently under intelligent control) around clouds. Whilst Simon has interviewed the wife, insufficient information was forthcoming to throw a great deal of light on the matter.
- A case of UFO sightings in Wiltshire has been allocated to Stuart Andrews to look into.
- Lee Norton is investigating UFO sightings reported in Dorset.
- Apparitions, footsteps, a voice and breezes have been reported at a workplace in Cumbria and Ian Topham is trying to make contact with the client.
- A lady in Lancashire has claimed that her grandchild gets bitten by something invisible when he comes to stay at her house and that unexplained footsteps have been heard. Claire Lawton is investigating this case.

Disclaimer: The following article explores the heritage and culture of Spiritualism and is not intended to a scientific report.

Parasearch investigating Spiritualism: an initial report

George Gregg

Two Parasearch members, between 2008-2009, were involved in participant observation of a Spiritualist Group. They have been learning about Spiritualist ideas and how modern Spiritualists incorporate a range of esoteric and eastern ideas into their belief system(s).

The following description highlights some of the Spiritualist beliefs:

Fairly early on in their exploration of the tradition they learned about the 7 Principles of the Spiritualists' National Union. These were said to be given to Emma Hardinge Britten in 1871 by the spirit of Robert Owen. The principles are:

- 1) The Fatherhood of God.
- 2) The Brotherhood of Man.
- 3) Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels.
- 4) Continuous Existence of the Human Soul.
- 5) Personal Responsibility.
- 6) Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all Good and Evil Deeds done on Earth.
- 7) Eternal Progress open to every Human Soul.

The group also explores psychic issues related to auras (energy fields), psychic readings using Voyager Cards (similar to Tarot), coloured ribbons (colour symbology), dowsing (rods / pendulums), chakras and reading the subtle body/ human energy field.

There has also been reference to the third eye and entering the spirit world during sleep. Lastly various meditation and visualisation methods, often to music, have been addressed.

Auras

The aura surrounds the body. It is the energy field that all living things have surrounding them. This includes humans, animals and plants too. Spirit energy can flow into the aura and it is possible, not only to heal people whose aura shows signs of debility, but to actually see our spirit friends from the world of spirit enter the auric field before communicating with the medium. The aura, sometimes called a bio-field, also expands during prayer and meditation. It is possible to detect this change in the aura by using dowsing rods or sometimes pendulums. There are some mediums / psychics who claim to see this take place. The group sometimes photographs the aura with a specialist aura camera. As the energy field is variable different colours can be seen in the field such as yellow, red, green, blue, orange, brown, black and white. A practiced psychic can interpret the significance of these.

HEF (Human Energy Field)

This is seven layers. The first is the etheric layer which is a matrix on which the body tissue can form. The second is the emotional layer which is related to one's feelings. The mental, the third layer, is associated with the logical mind. The fourth is related to the record of past experiences and is called the astral layer. The fifth layer is called the template and refers to the divine will, truth and purpose. The celestial layer, the sixth, is also connected to the divine but focuses on love and the angelic. Lastly the seventh layer is also associated with the divine in terms of wisdom and healing.

Chakras

The Parasearch members were also taught that the chakras are energy centres in the body. They are made up of prana (life energy) which flows through these centres of energy. There is an approximate alignment with the bodies' structures and energy fields. The root chakra is the first energy centre and it aligns with the base of the spinal column. This chakra is red and is symbolically related to your physical life.

The second, pelvic or sacral chakra, which is orange, is connected to sexuality, interpersonal relationships, creativity and one's emotional wellbeing. The third called the solar plexus chakra (above the naval) is yellow in colour and is associated with self-esteem. The heart, or fourth, chakra is level with the heart and is green in colour. This energy centre is related to emotional love.

At the base of the throat is the fifth chakra which is blue in colour. It is related to truth.

The third eye or sixth chakra is found in the centre of the forehead and indigo in colour. It is associated with psychic perception. Hence the expression 'opening the third eye.' The crown chakra, the seventh, is found on the top of the head and is violet in colour. Some writers suggest it could also be white. There is a debate about this. However the crown chakra is thought to be highly important as it connects you to the spirit world and the divine. Ultimately the pranic energy that flows through your chakras connects your physical being to spirit.

Meditation/ Visualisation

In Spiritualism meditation is about preparing oneself to communicate with the spirit world. Most exercises relate to settling the mind before readings. During meditation one becomes receptive to spirit, spirit guides and one becomes more focused and psychic. Ultimately it can prepare one for developing trance mediumistic skills.

Sleep/ Dreams

Spiritualists believe when you are asleep and dream you are connecting with the spirit world. One can develop contact with deceased loved ones whilst dreaming and receive advice and premonitions from spirit. In time the dreamer can also learn to astral travel and consult the Akashic record where information about one's soul is imprinted in the astral light.

Psychic Readings

This is about developing one's intuition and moving beyond 'gut feelings.' By using various devices such as Voyager cards (with a strong similarity to Tarot cards) images are used to generate psychic impressions about people that you may be working with in the psychic / spiritual development group. Other technologies used in development are ribbons, dowsing rods / pendulums and free association experiments. The investigators involved with the group have become quite skilled in this area of developing psychic reading skills. It is also becoming apparent that there is a complex symbology related to understanding information from the spirit world.

Conclusion

This is just a very basic report and few conclusions can be drawn as this was an ongoing investigation. This is a straightforward descriptive passage with no attempt at critical analysis. The findings are difficult to substantiate from a scientific perspective. However it was thought that the few early findings would be of interest to the AAI group. Andrew has promised an illuminating article on aura cameras for the next issue.

AAI's are on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups.php?id=1601977789&gv=12#/group.php?gid=84603007524>

Modified Arthur C. Clarke's Scale of Probability (1985) 'World of Strange Powers'

Scale of Probability	Paranormal Phenomena	Definition of Probability
+5	Fire walking	Certainly True
+4	Stigmata	Highly Probable
+4	Ghosts / Apparitions (as an hallucination)	Highly Probable
+3		50/50 Chance of being true
+2	Dowsing (for water especially)	Possibility (needs further investigation)
+2	Poltergeists	Possibility (needs further investigation)
+2	Telepathy	Possibility (needs further investigation)
+1	Premonitions	Barely Possible
0	Psychokinesis (PK)	Don't Know
-1		Very Unlikely
-2	Reincarnation	Almost Certainly not true
-2	Life after Death (previously Spiritualism)	Almost Certainly not true
-3		Untrue beyond any reasonable doubt
-4		Certainly Untrue

Above is a probability scale based on the one used by Arthur C Clarke's TV Programme World of Strange Powers, modified by the Parasearch Research & Fieldwork Team. Write in to George to say if you agree or do not with the conclusions and why. Get your email /letter published in the next e-Bulletin.

An email to the Letter Pages of 'The Freethinker'

George recently wrote a letter to the magazine Freethinker and a copy is enclosed below. Please write to George saying whether you agree or disagree with his arguments and points of view. Interesting replies, of all shades, will be published in the next e-Bulletin.

Dear Editor (Freethinker)
<http://freethinker.co.uk/>

Before I start my argument I would like to say that I am a humanist which means (1) no God (2) no afterlife (3) no ghosts (as denizens of the afterlife) and (3) a trust in the scientific method. However I have been a psychical researcher for most of my life. For me it was the final straw when William Harwood accused the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* of being equivalent to the *Journal of the Flat Earth Society*.

Has he tried to get an article published in JSPR? The argument that parapsychologists have just set up their own journals simply because the articles in them were not scientific is rather like suggesting that the *Astrophysical Journal*, the *Journal of Atmospheric Chemistry, Physics* and the *Journal of Sound and Vibration* were set up for the same reason. Ever heard of 'publish or be damned'? Or what about communication between members of a specialist scientific subculture? WH clearly has not read JSPR as it is a fierce defender of the scientific method. The work published is double-blind, statistical and does not always publish positive results. I noticed that WH quotes CEM Hansel's definitive debunking of parapsychology's best evidence called '*The Search for Psychic Power: ESP and Parapsychology Revisited*', which was published in 1989. That's, hold on I'm counting on my fingers, nearly twenty years ago. Read Paul Loader's article in *New Scientist* (03 April 2004). The case for scientists taking Psi seriously has been made hands down. Read Kittenis et al (2004), '*Distant psychophysiological interaction effects between related and unrelated participants*'. Naturally precognition 'is problematic because it violates causality' (Kaku M., *New Scientist*, 5 April, 2008). If you are looking for the latest best evidence against Psi try Samuel et al (2008) '*Using Neuroimaging to Resolve the Psi Debate*'. You see this psychical researcher could not care less if Psi exists or not, all I'm interested in is the evidence. Now a few words about that genius Albert Einstein of whom I have considerable respect. If he could not recognise the existence of quantum mechanics then I'm afraid he was not competent to speak about ESP. However you were right about CSICOP, they examine, evaluate and annihilate! But I rarely read that this pressure group has carried out any meaningful experiments of their own. The idea that parapsychologists are witless morons who cannot accept their mortality is in the least bizarre and outdated. Modern parapsychologists are exploring the idea (true or false) that human beings, or at least some, may have abilities greater than previously suspected by biology or psychology. What is the problem with that? What is wrong with testing these ideas out? Personally the idea of surviving into an afterlife and ending up with all those relatives that I thought that I finally had seen the back of, is one of the most frightening concepts in the entire multiverse.

George Gregg
Humanist & Psychical Researcher
Worcestershire

A request from Lionel Fanthorpe:

Dear ASSAP friends and colleagues,

[Help needed with research statistics on paranormal cases involving police](#)

We are currently undertaking a massive research and statistical analysis project involving cases where the Police have been involved in UFO sightings, and/or any other anomalous phenomena. If anyone in ASSAP has any information about cases that have involved the police (e.g. someone who had witnessed something odd and then reported it to the Police).

We shall be ever so grateful for anything that anyone can help us with.

Warmest wishes,

As always,

Lionel & Patricia Fanthorpe

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