



exploring the
extraordinary

Fifth Conference
York, UK
20th-22nd September, 2013

FRIDAY, 20th September

1.00-1.15 Welcome and introduction

Parapsychology I

1.15-1.45 'Third eye dreaming'- The role of the pineal gland, transliminality and music in dream ESP.7' *Sarah Grierson*

1.45-2.15 'Dr Alex Tanous: The life of a psychic psychical researcher' *Callum E. Cooper*

2.15-2.35 Coffee Break

Parapsychology II

2.35-3.05 'Exploring the phenomenological aspect of the apparition experience' *Aaron Lomas*

3.05-3.45 PANEL DISCUSSION: Studying parapsychology, and hopes for the future' *Callum E. Cooper, Sarah Grierson and Aaron Lomas, University of Northampton*

3.45-4.05 Coffee Break

Extraordinary Journeys

4.05-4.35 'The Psychic Web: An extraordinary journey' *Dr Tamlyn Ryan*

4.35-5.05 'In search of the philosopher's stone' *Maria Papaspyrou*

7.00- Dinner in Hotel

SATURDAY, 21st September

Spiritualism in Society

10.00-10.30 'Spirits, séances and Stoke-on-Trent: Visualising the hidden world of Spiritualism in a post-industrial city' *Dr Sara MacKian* with *Daniele Sambo*, *Dr Steve Pile* and *Dr Nadia Bartolini*

10.30-11.00 'Hidden apprenticeships: The transmission of enhanced awareness in mediumistic and other shamanic traditions' *Dr David Gordon Wilson*

11.00-11.15 Coffee Break

Ghosts and Hauntings I

11.15-11.45 'Spirit Art: Paranormally produced precipitated paintings, America c1852' *Ann Bridge Davies*

11.45-12.15 'Scared to death and other ghost stories from Victorian Sheffield' *Dr David Clarke*

12.15-12.45 'Book hauntings' *Mark Valentine*

12.45-2.00 Lunch

Extraordinary Fictions, Objects and Space

2.00-2.30 'Fiction and its double' *Andy Sharp*

2.30-3.00 'Playback Hex: William Burroughs and the magical objectivity of the tape recorder' *Dr James Riley*

3.00-3.15 Coffee Break

Anthropology, Theory and Experience

3.15-3.45 'Experiences of synchronicity and Anthropological endeavours' *Dr Christel Mattheums*

3.45-4.15 'Anthropology and the extraordinary' *Dr Hannah Gilbert*

4.15-5.00 DISCUSSION: Representing our own and others' experience

7.00- Dinner at Ask Italian

SUNDAY, 22nd September

Methods and Tools

10.00-10.30 'Seeing what is 'unseen': Using video to enrich our social understanding of paranormal experiences' *Rachael Hayward*

10.30-11.00 'Altered States of Consciousness as a principle for sonic arts composition' *Dr Jon Weinel*

11.00-11.20 Coffee Break

Ghosts and Hauntings II

11.20-11.50 'Physical Mediumship, Spiritualist ritual and the search for ectoplasm' *Shannon Taggart*

11.50-12.20 'Reviving Chinese ghosts' *Prof Charles Emmons*

12.20-1.00 General Discussion and Closing Remarks

1.00 Lunch

ABSTRACTS

'Third eye dreaming'- The role of the pineal gland, transliminality and music in dream ESP.

Sarah Grierson

Much research has found significant and positive results for the occurrence of dream ESP under experimental conditions. However, little research has focused on the neurobiology of dream ESP or the psychological characteristics of those who perform well in dream ESP experiments. Nine participants each completed a measure of transliminality, and a measure of paranormal belief in addition to keeping a dream diary and recalling dreams at two time points (3am and 8am) over one trial night. The effect of music on dream ESP was also investigated by allocating participants to one of three music groups (Solfeggio, relaxation music and no music). The overall effect of music on dream ESP was found to be non-significant. In addition, there was no significant difference between psychological characteristics or recalling dreams at 3am and at 8am against dream ESP scores. Possible explanations and implications for the findings will be discussed.

Dr Alex Tanous: The Life of a Psychic Psychological Researcher

Callum E. Cooper

Where have all the great mediums of our time gone? Mrs Piper, Rudi Schneider, Eileen Garrett, and many more, all seem to have come and gone and slipped through our fingers. While they were tested, we have, however, not had enough time to learn from these individuals as fully as we would like. One of the most remarkable individuals, who is yet often forgotten within UK research, is Dr Alex Tanous. Born and raised in Portland, Maine (USA), from an early age Tanous produced remarkable predictions with incredible accuracy, and embraced his abilities even when his peers tried to make him avoid issues of the 'paranormal', having followed an education in theology with the idea that one day he would become a priest.

Later in life, Tanous collected an impressive amount of degrees, including three master's degrees in theology, philosophy and education, and was awarded a doctorate of divinity. He lectured for many years in philosophy and theology, later settling at the University of Southern Maine, where he taught classes on dreams, healing and parapsychology. For twenty years he was the leading research participant for out-of-body experiences with the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR). It was during his time with the ASPR that he worked closely with Dr Karlis Osis, not only on laboratory investigations of psi, but also conducting haunting investigations. Up until now, little has been known about the Tanous/Osis investigation team and how they worked. This presentation will discuss the life and work of the late Dr Alex Tanous, psychic, and contradictorily, parapsychologist also.

Exploring the phenomenological aspects of the apparitional experience

Aaron Lomas

Apparitional experiences have been known to occur throughout history. Even in contemporary society hauntings still occur regularly, although significant scepticism is often shown towards the experient. Many argue such experiences are due to individual's beliefs regarding the paranormal, which in turn makes them more likely to experience such phenomena.

Research has collected thousands of cases of apparition experiences, with many researchers concluding that they are caused by a number of phenomenological factors such as environment, emotion, state of mind, time of occurrence and lighting conditions. This study investigated these factors through a new sample of accounts from those who have claimed to have had an apparitional experience. Results indicate similar findings to that of previous research suggesting that those who experience an apparition are of a young age, within the home environment, in a hypnogogic state of mind, and usually experience apparitions during the late evening/night time period in dark or dim lighting conditions. The personality background of most of the participants was 'openness' which suggests that those who do experience an apparition are also more likely to be imaginative, open to experience, and with a higher tendency to believe in the paranormal before the experience.

The Psychic Web: An extraordinary journey

Dr Tamlyn Ryan

This paper concerns my experience of researching a field that I was already very familiar with: psychic readings on the internet. There is little sociological analysis of the nature and experience of online psychic services, or indeed the spiritual orientations of these kinds of practices; autoethnographic techniques provide the opportunity for a more intimate focus on phenomena that would otherwise be overlooked using traditional methods.

Having had a keen interest in the practices and beliefs of this community for most of my life and having been a member of several online communities relating to psychic spirituality, studying the psychic-spiritual milieu from the perspective of an insider was considered to be the most appropriate approach. In particular, I wanted to know: what can be understood about the subjective experience of psychic reading online from the intrapsychic perspective of someone who for whom, an occult knowledge of reality is personally meaningful?

I discuss some key findings from my research, with particular focus on the autoethnographic journey. Whilst the study did manage to obtain an intrapsychic perspective on psychic readings online, the sociological analytic mind does not easily accommodate the nature of psychic readings. I discuss why this might have been the case and, a year since I finished my doctorate, I critically consider what questions the autoethnography raised for me as a researcher, and what questions the research raised for me as a member of the psychic-spiritual milieu.

In search of the philosopher's stone

Maria Papaspyrou

This presentation narrates a personal healing process through the use of entheogenic agents. These agents provided the transcendent space that allowed inner wounds to be reconfigured into a more manageable and workable form, releasing the soul from inner/outer conflict. Experiences with three different entheogenic agents enabled me to access states of consciousness that fostered healing in my familial relationships, by reframing conflicts, through form of visions and wider understandings, into deeper pictorial, mythological, and transcendent narratives. These experiences in the Other Worlds have been translated into substantial and concrete shifts in the Ordinary World.

This journey through the 'immaterial' considers entheogenic agents as psychological/emotional catalysts for transformation and growth. The Jungian framework of alchemy and individuation has been central in filtering my transformational process and the focus is on its relevance to integrating psychedelic explorations. This is a piece for the emerging mosaic of our neoanimistic era of consciousness exploration and immaterial integration.

Spirits, Séances and Stoke-on-Trent: Visualising the hidden world of Spiritualism in a post-industrial city

Dr Sara MacKian with Daniele Sambo, Prof Steve Pile & Dr Nadia Bartolini

It has often been assumed that Spiritualism is a religion of the past, enjoying its heyday in the first half of the twentieth-century before fading into the margins of cultural history. However, this may reflect a decline in academic interest in the movement rather than an actual decline in the relevance of Spiritualism to wider society. The Spiritualist Movement is something we think we 'know' through historical archives and representations of ghostly encounters in popular culture. However, as this paper explores, the geographies of Spiritualism extend far beyond the popular image of Victorian seances and Derek Acorah being possessed on *Most Haunted*. Spiritualists, by virtue of their very personal relationship with 'Spirit', inhabit invisible landscapes of otherworldly encounters which are mapped across the mundane material worlds they live in.

Drawing on a participatory photography project this paper begins to trace these hidden contours of Spiritualism in Stoke-on-Trent area that has been the subject of very little academic research. Known affectionately as ‘the Potteries’, Stoke-on-Trent was once home to a vibrant pottery industry whose past is evocatively written into the city’s landscape, resulting in a peculiarly haunting backdrop to the familiar story of urban industrial decay. Described by Arnold Bennett in *Anna of the Five Towns*’ Stoke-on-Trent has an ‘enchanted air’: ‘nothing can be more prosaic... yet be it said that romance is even here – the romance which, for those who have an eye to perceive it, ever dwells amid the seats of industrial manufacture, softening the coarseness, transfiguring the squalor’. In the 1960s, whilst Bennett’s ‘industrial squalor’ was in decline, there were twelve very active Spiritualist churches in the city, one being home to Gordon Higginson, the longest serving President of the Spiritualists National Union; making Stoke-on-Trent the hub of a thriving Spiritualist movement. This legacy, together with the active life of the remaining Spiritualist churches today, is mapped across the ‘enchanted air’ of the city for those who have ‘an eye to perceive it’.

Using the geographical imagination and the longstanding relationship between Spiritualism and the art of photography, this paper explores how these intangible otherworldly landscapes disrupt and contest the mundane life of a modern-day post-industrial city; challenging us to reconfigure the way we understand place, materiality and the otherworldly agency of spirit.

Hidden Apprenticeships: The transmission of enhanced awareness in mediumistic and other shamanic traditions

Dr David Gordon Wilson

The paper draws upon extended (2001-2012) ethnography of a Spiritualist community (a Christian Spiritualist church) in the United Kingdom (Wilson 2013). My involvement with that community reveals mediumship in the British Spiritualist tradition as involving the transmission of a body of practical knowledge or ‘lore’. The mode of transmission is apprentice-participation (Forrest 1986) or engagement in participant-observation, typified in the early life apprenticeships in thinking that bring human beings to consciousness (Rogoff 1990).

The content of the transmitted tradition can be described as procedures for the expansion of awareness, combined with a transmitted falsifiable history comprising both central and local traditions that can helpfully be described using the model of religion developed by the French sociologist Daniele Hervieu-Leger (2000). The model of apprenticeship that arises is also discernible in traditional shamanisms but has not to date been adequately explored in scholarly treatments of those traditions. [The insights derived offer support for Eliade's passing suggestion that shamanism should be placed among the mysticisms (other difficulties with his cross-cultural synthesis notwithstanding).

In order to articulate the Spiritualist tradition fully, what are needed are not only analyses of conversations between mediums and their clients, such as those of Wooffitt (2006) and Gilbert (2008) but, perhaps more crucially, analyses of the circle dialogues taking place between apprentices and their circle leaders, and between apprentices and their peers (Rogoff). It is, of course, precisely these dialogues that are most inaccessible to researchers (a practicality that has kept all but a few at bay). Perhaps for this reason, scholars such as Wouter Hanegraaff might be justified in characterizing Spiritualism as an esoteric tradition, for all that it adopts the forms of open worship.

Although individual apprentices may not stay the course (and many do not), the Spiritualist apprenticeship makes use of hidden, highly personal, experiential teaching to provide a mechanism for the non-prescriptive, undogmatic (but nevertheless guiding) external validation (by existing holders of traditional authority) of apprentices' subjective realities. Undertaking this apprenticeship leads, in turn, to their recognition as practitioners and demonstrators of the tradition, ensuring their future recognition as the embodiment of that which is regarded as authoritative within the tradition. We have here a well-structured, highly disciplined approach to the maintenance of a core lineage of teachings embodied in a succession of practitioner authority figures; this represents the highly sophisticated reinforcement of a religious tradition that, in large part, eschews formal dogmatic teaching as to what should or should not be 'believed'.

For Spiritualists, the concern is not so much one of 'belief', but of what to trust in as real, leading to the recurrent referencing of personal experience. In maintaining a focus upon mediumistic apprenticeship, I have identified what Hervieu-Léger refers to as the 'processes of belief' that underpin Spiritualism, but which I prefer to refer to as its processes of 'knowing' or affirming.

The paper proposes that the mediumistic/shamanic apprenticeship identified has as its central aim the enhancement or expansion of human consciousness, representing an adult phase of Rogoff's exploration of consciousness as the outcome of a childhood apprenticeship in thinking. In this way, the paper offers insights that it is hoped will contribute to our understanding of the extent to which human consciousness is itself a learning outcome. The paper suggests that, rather than comprehending unusual perceptive abilities as 'extra-sensory', it may be more productive to explore the extent to which such abilities might be learned enhancements of everyday cognition.

Forrest, B. (1986) Apprentice participation: Method in the study of subjective reality, *Urban Life*, 14: 431-453

Gilbert, H. (2008) *Speaking of Spirits: Representations and experiences of the spirit world in British spirit mediumship*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York

Hervieu-Leger, D. (2000) *Religion as a Chain of Memory*. Rutgers University Press.

Rogoff, B. (1996) *Apprenticeship in Thinking: Cognitive Development in Social Context*. OUP

Wilson, D.G. (2013) *Redefining Shamanisms*. Bloomsbury Academic

Wooffitt, R. (2006) *The Language of Mediums and Psychics*. Ashgate

Spirit-art: Paranormally produced precipitated paintings, America c1892.

Ann Bridge Davies

In 1892 spirit-art in England was almost at a stand-still. However, in Chicago and upper New York State a new form of paranormally produced paintings were just evolving. The precipitated paintings produced by two mediumistic sisters, May and Lizzie Bangs, startled the spectators who watched the art develop on canvas or board, created not by the hands of the mediums, but invisible psychic forces. These were not ordinary paintings and drawings scribbled onto cartridge paper claimed to be drawn under the control of the spirits of the deceased: these pastelsque paintings were claimed to be produced by telekinetic energies which teleported dust, fibres from the room, and other fine particles onto an upright surface producing the portrait of one who had died.

My presentation will be based on two studies: *Pearl* and *Iola*, two precipitated paintings created by the paranormal energies of the Bangs sisters. I will also discuss these art pieces as a phenomena of paranormally presented performance art.

Scared to Death & other ghost stories from Victorian Sheffield

Dr David Clarke

The expression 'you look as if you have seen a ghost' is occasionally used to describe people who appear pale or shocked. In folklore the traditional reaction to a ghostly encounter was to feel one's hair stand on end, which has Biblical precedents. More recently, films and television programmes such as *Most Haunted* have played upon the popular desire to be both entertained and scared. But in 19th century and early 20th century England there were a number of press reports describing individuals who were alleged to have been literally 'scared to death' whilst participating in communal ghost hunts. Inquest juries occasionally recorded fright as either a contributor to, or the actual cause of death, in an era before underlying medical conditions were fully understood as they are today. This presentation will examine the motif of death through supernatural cases with reference to a case study of alleged 'death from fright' from Sheffield, Yorkshire, in 1855. The death of 48-year-old Hannah Rallison was precipitated by a ghost 'experience' at a séance in the city and was the subject of a widely reported coroner's inquest. This paper will discuss this example in the context of wider supernatural belief and contemporary legend in Victorian England, and Yorkshire in particular. The Hannah Rallison case will be featured in the author's book *Scared to Death & other ghost stories from Victorian Sheffield*, to be launched on Hallowe'en 2013 at Sheffield's Off the Shelf literature festival.

Book Hauntings

Mark Valentine

Not all extraordinary experiences are dramatic. Sometimes they happen quietly, stealthily. Perhaps one of the most common, if under-recorded, examples is an intangible sense of "otherness", a feeling or impression of being close to a different way of knowing. This may take many forms: this paper looks at one specialised example.

Book finders and book collectors visit hundreds of second hand bookshops, fairs, charity shops, jumbles sales and other venues every year in search of elusive titles. Most of them dislike being asked what they want, or whether they are looking for anything in particular. In some cases, this is because they do not quite know. These seekers have a sense of a book they would want, a longing, but they do not care to define this too closely. And this may lead to uncanny experiences.

Sometimes this may be as simple as “knowing” that a book is there for them: or a feeling that a “find” is about to happen. Others have felt their gaze drawn to an unpromising volume, or believe that there are times when they have “magnetic fingers” that cannot help but locate important books. Then, there are those in pursuit of a strand of thought who find books with the insights and sidelights they need suddenly coming into their hands. And there are days of dejection also, when these apparent powers or influences are unmistakably turned off, when the books are cold.

Certainly, if you look long enough and often enough at many shelves of books, some wonderfully unexpected finds are likely to come your way. But is that all that is in play? Do book collectors develop a mysterious seventh sense? Or do some books call to them? This paper explores the strange and subtle sorcery associated with book-finding, drawing on published and unpublished sources, personal experiences and field work.

Fiction and its Double

Andy Sharp

Since its inception *English Heretic* has attempted to explore the conspiratorial interplay between the imagination and geography, fictions and their double in the landscapes that inspire them. Do the myths imposed upon a place by its representation in film and literature create or feed from new and existing realities? Using exploratory methods derived from magick and experimental arts, the project has been a conscious attempt to open up a fault line in the rational contours of reality and to create an hermetic landscape rich in symbolic correspondences. For this talk I will illustrate numerous creative investigations conducted at sites previously employed in cinema (particularly horror film) and literature, the mining of aesthetic truths from such activities, and the possible benefits of evolving an imaginal dialogue with places of fictional power or pathology.

Playback Hex: William Burroughs and the magical objectivity of the Tape Recorder

Dr James Riley

This paper considers the status of the tape recorder as a magical object in the creative praxis of William Burroughs. Taking as a starting point the infamous instance of his attempt to 'curse' the London Moka bar in 1972, this discussion will look at the manner in which Burroughs simultaneously used the instrument as a practical device, a compositional tool and literary motif. In essence, my paper seeks to think through, and to a degree, synthesise the overlapping layers of biography, imaginative investment and textual practice that surround Burroughs's work. Academic criticism of his writing often seeks to separate these levels. My point will be that an understanding of the particular significance Burroughs invests into the tape recorder provides a means to conceptualise the creative and strategic matrix he establishes between specific material objects and a wider imaginative project.

Experiences of synchronicity and Anthropological endeavours

Dr Christel Mattheuws

This thought exercise sets off from personal experiences of synchronicity related to happenings in Madagascar. Synchronicity is a Jungian term that refers to a certain psychic event that is 'meaningfully paralleled by some external non-psychic material event without a causal connection between them'. Synchronic experiences have no logical explanation or physical cause. They most often happen during, or because of heightened emotion, and can be amplified and activated through self-cultivation, or individuation or self-realization. Would the anthropological academic curriculum become enriched if increased awareness courses became part of the training? Using the example of synchronicity, I will explore the complexity of this, considering: is the principle of synchronicity universal or shaped within the mind-matter dichotomy? Is the seat of synchronicity the unconscious (as Jung states), and is the unconscious universal to human-kind? Is the principle of synchronicity transcendental as is most often accepted? These questions relate to cosmologies and nature philosophies in which concepts and understandings of life are embedded. Do we need increased awareness? This question relates to ways of knowing and their limits.

Related to the first two questions the kind of self-cultivation we seek. Does it relate to brain function, to the mind, the psyche, the body, to all of them and how? Do we need theory or practice or both? And finally, how do we relate this to the field where anthropologists often go? How can an anthropologist become prepared enough to go to the field and explore the extraordinary among or with the other? And what happens if the anthropologist comes back?

The principle of synchronicity and all the questions on which I will elaborate in my presentation will be treated from a life centric and relational point of view. I will try to cross the boundaries of mind and matter, consciousness and unconsciousness, anthropology and ethnography, oneself and the other without transcending them, but by putting them in perspective in relation to the other. I hope that this will bring us closer to a richer understanding of what synchronicity is all about.

Anthropology and the extraordinary

Dr Hannah Gilbert

Anthropology's intellectual heritage stems from an earlier goal to make sense of 'Others' with which the Western world was now increasingly aware. Early anthropologists looked to scientific inspired methodologies to interpret the beliefs, customs and behaviours of non-Western societies. Many of these beliefs, customs and behaviours involved aspects of the extraordinary, a subject matter Western science has become increasingly dismissive of.

This paper will explore some of the ways in which anthropologists have made sense of the extraordinary. It will examine how the development of more reflexive attitudes within certain areas of inquiry, including the role of researcher experiences, have gradually started to cultivate new ways of studying extraordinary beliefs and experiences.

Seeing what is 'unseen': Using video to enrich our social understanding of paranormal experiences

Rachael Hayward

The last 10-15 years has seen an astonishing increase in the number of social groups that form with the purpose of capturing evidence of paranormal phenomena on camera. Popularly known as ghost hunting or paranormal research groups these individuals come together to explore, invoke and communicate with the otherworldly. At the heart of their activities is the intention to document proof of their own and others paranormal experiences through the aid of video recording equipment.

This presentation will explore the use of video to record paranormal phenomenon within these groups, and address how these recordings can provide a rich set of data for researchers captured in situ. I will present my own data, captured during five years involvement running and participating in modern paranormal groups prior to my current research-led interests. Through discussion of this data I will introduce the challenges that I have faced as a reflective and indeed retrospective researcher, and the ways in which I have attempted to overcome difficulties in analysing and presenting the 'paranormal experience' within my work. As video is the main focus of this presentation I will use extracts of my data to demonstrate the different ways in which paranormal experiences are captured visually.

Modern Paranormal Groups communicate with each other, use a variety of tools, and orientate to spaces in the environment during their interaction with Spirit. These interactions are complex and often subtle. Video, therefore, provides an opportunity to view scenes repeatedly, and as it often forms part of the group's activities, offers an unobtrusive means of capturing the fascinating social actions that occur. Through this presentation I hope to provide support for the use of video as a means of collecting data of the 'unseen', and explore how this can help to enrich our understanding of the social world.

Altered States of Consciousness as a principle for Sonic Arts composition

Dr Jon Weinel

Various cultures throughout history have sought to undergo visionary journeys using hallucinogenic plants and drugs. In many cases these experiences have been used as a basis for the creation of art, literature and music. Informed by a survey of relevant work, this practice-led research developed a compositional process for creating sonic artworks (electroacoustic music) that are based upon hallucinogenic perceptual states. Features of typical ASC experiences are used as a principle upon which to base the design of sonic materials and their arrangement into corresponding musical structures. Though situated within the electroacoustic idiom, the work also draws significantly upon Western psychedelic culture and electronic dance music. The output was a creative portfolio containing a series of fixed sonic arts compositions, video art, laptop performances and a video game hack. This was supported by a theoretical commentary.

In this paper I provide a general overview of this research project, and will outline the compositional processes that I developed and discuss the various associated creative projects. It is hoped that the research will contribute to compositional methods in the field of sonic arts, while also providing an example of a possible method for reflecting ASC experiences in the wider sphere of digital artworks. As creative applications of computer technology develop, we may then eventually be able to provide ASC simulations.

Physical Mediumship, Spiritualist Ritual and the Search for Ectoplasm

Shannon Taggart

After learning the true details of her grandfather's death through a medium, Shannon Taggart began photographing Modern Spiritualism. Through images made from 2001-2013, this talk will examine the elusive substance of ectoplasm and its various expressions within Spiritualist ritual. It will focus on The "New Age of Physical Mediumship", comparing and contrasting the séance cabinet work and ectoplasmic manifestations of physical mediums Sharon Harvey, Gordon Garforth and Kai Muegge.

Reviving Chinese ghosts

Charles Emmons

Chinese Ghosts and ESP: A Study of Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences (Emmons, 1982) was a cross-cultural investigation in Hong Kong based on sociological, anthropological, and parapsychological frameworks. Essentially it found great similarities to parapsychological studies of ghosts in Western culture and supported what is now known as the “experiential source theory” of folk religious beliefs in the sociology of religion. I am currently working on a new edition of this book based in part on updated literature review and analysis of some new cases from a variety of sources. It would be very interesting to see if new patterns have emerged especially after 1997, when Hong Kong transferred from British influence to inclusion in the People’s Republic of China. My hypothesis is that any changes would be more likely to occur in ghost lore than in first-hand reports. The reason for this expectation is that the 1980 results showed that first-hand reports in Hong Kong were essentially the same as reports from the West, in spite of significant differences in the traditional culture and folklore of ghosts. Therefore, experiences seem to be less subject to cultural influence than beliefs and folklore.

Even if there are no significant changes in reports and lore between 1980 and the present, it will be interesting to collect more cases to reinforce the previous data set. Recent treatments of Hong Kong ghosts in journalistic and scholarly accounts have also presented some new aspects, such as covering the issue of whether hauntings should be reported in real estate transactions. I plan to reanalyze both these new materials and my previous data in the light of more recent thinking about ghosts presented both in my own work and in the work of other scholars. This presentation will summarize the original 1982 work, present some new material, and provide a discussion of new methodology and new analysis.

Emmons, C. (1982) *Chinese Ghosts and ESP: A Study of Paranormal Beliefs and Experiences*. Scarecrow.

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr David Clark is a course leader and senior lecturer in journalism at Sheffield Hallam University. He has Ph.D in English Cultural Tradition and Folklore, which was completed at the University of Sheffield, in 1999. Since 2008 he has been working with The National Archives (TNA) as consultant for the ongoing release of the UFO files created by Britain's Ministry of Defence, which is documented in his 2009 book *The UFO Files*. David is a frequent contributor to radio and television, has a regular column - Flying Saucery - in the *Fortean Times*, and is the author of several books on the supernatural and folklore, with his latest *Scared to Death & other ghost stories from Victorian Sheffield*, scheduled for publication later this year.

Callum E Cooper has a BSc in psychology from the University of Northampton and an MRes in psychological research methods, from Sheffield Hallam University. He recently published *Telephone Calls from the Dead*, an analysis of post-mortem telecommunication experiences. Callum has received the Eileen J. Garrett Scholarship (2009, Parapsychology Foundation), and the Alex Tanous Scholarship Award (2011 & 2012, Alex Tanous Foundation for Scientific Research). At present, he is studying for a PhD in Psychology at the University of Northampton.

Ann Bridge Davies was formerly Head of Art in Liverpool and Staffordshire, and Manager for the Weekend College in Stafford UK. In 2005 she began teaching and demonstrating spirit-art world wide, and has taught and demonstrated spirit-art to groups in Britain, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Dubai and the USA*.

In 2007 and 2009 two DVD's of her spirit-art were released, and in 2011 she published *Portraits from Spirit* was published. Following the success of her book, Davies decided to take her work into academia; firstly to Aberystwyth University where she researched the History and Philosophy of spirit-art as a Master's degree, then at Derby University where she is currently completing her work as a PhD candidate. Public presentations relating to spirit-art and the production process of the five spirit-art classifications have included: Derby New Horizons (2011) Society of Psychical Research (2010) British Psychological Society/ Transpersonal Section (2010, 2011, 2012), EtE (2010, 2013), New Hope, Pennsylvania, USA (2008) and East Midlands University Conference (2013).

* -As an oeuvre of art, spirit-art is not well known, and to those who believe that a physical life does not end at death students welcomed this alternative form of mediumship, which not only demonstrated in the form of a recognisable image, that "the spirit" of a person not only can be drawn, but the image can also be recognised. In 2007 the Spirit Art Society was formed and the students became exhibiting artists at the Ancient High House in Stafford, with three exhibitions of their work including American and European exhibitors.

Prof Charles Emmons is a sociologist at Gettysburg College. His books include *Science and Spirit: Exploring the Limits of Consciousness*, *Chinese Ghosts and ESP*, *At the Threshold* (on UFOs), and *Guided by Spirit*. He appears on the “Ghosts of Gettysburg” TV shows, and is a member of The Society for Scientific Exploration, and Exploring the Extraordinary.

Dr Hannah Gilbert has a BA (Hons) in Anthropology from Durham University, and PhD in Sociology from the University of York. Her doctoral project explored the role and experience of spirits in contemporary British spirit mediumship. She runs her own events business, Compassionate Wellbeing, which promotes compassionate approaches to health and wellbeing, and is currently writing a book about the role of emotions in our representations and understandings of the dead. Since 2007, she has co-directed Exploring the Extraordinary with her good friend Dr Madeleine Castro

Sarah Grigson has a Bsc in Psychology from the University of Northampton. During her time as an undergraduate student she collaborated with Prof Chris Roe and Aaron Lomas on a research project funded by the SPR, entitled "Two independent replications of Daryl Bem's automated precognition experiments", which was presented at the SPR's 36th annual conference. Her main academic interests lie in the neurobiology of psi, psychedelics and psi, and the use of Ganzfeld techniques in psi research. Sarah is currently involved with teaching on a programme for gifted and talented children, and will be starting her Msc in Transpersonal, Parapsychology and consciousness studies at the University of Northampton in September. Sarah has further aspirations to apply parapsychological and Transpersonal knowledge to clinical settings.

Rachael Hayward has an MA in Management Studies from the University of Aberdeen, and is currently studying for a PhD at the University of York. Following over five years working and interacting with amateur paranormal research groups, she intends to bring a sociological perspective to the study of this popular cultural phenomenon. Interested primarily in collective experiences, her research focuses on the interactions that occur between members of a group during an anomalous experience. Rachael is currently a Marketing Officer at Robert Gordon University.

Aaron Lomas recently graduated from the University of Northampton with a BSc in Psychology. Within this course at the university, Aaron was able to study his interest further in parapsychology, focusing on apparitional experiences, poltergeist activity, NDEs and OBEs. His dissertation was based on apparitional experiences, focusing on the individuals rather than the apparition itself, which led him to break down certain psychological aspects that could contribute towards an individual to have such experiences. He is continuing this research as a larger project, which he hopes can contribute towards an MA and PhD. He is hoping to carry on later this year at the University of Northampton with the TPACS (Transpersonal Psychology and Consciousness Studies) MA course, as well as publishing future articles regarding his research with various parapsychological societies (such as the SPR).

Dr Sara Mackian is Senior Lecturer in Health and Wellbeing at The Open University. Formerly Lecturer in Health Geographies at the University of Manchester, the driving theme underpinning her research is a curiosity for how people, communities and organisations interact around issues of illness, health and wellbeing. This has led to a range of studies exploring ME, parenting, sexuality, spirituality and public health. A geographer by training, Sara has a particular interest in qualitative research methodologies, and has developed a method for ‘mapping’ data analysis, which she uses to visualize the worlds of experience revealed through her research, where the physical, socio-cultural, subjective and otherworldly intersect. She is author of *‘Everyday Spirituality: Social and Spatial Worlds of Enchantment’* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Dr Christel Matthys graduated from Aberdeen in 2008. Her main fields of interests are spirituality, astrology, intangible knowledge, development and ecology (with a strong attraction for islands and mountainous regions) that she gradually explored in her academic choices, in travelling (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan, Kenya, Guinea Conakry and Madagascar) and visits of development projects, international contacts, and practical trainings in both development and biological agriculture. Her present direction is much influenced by Tim Ingold’s work, Goethean Science and her experiences in Madagascar. While trained in a body-centred phenomenology of human beings, her new visions have become life-centric, exploring the “organic” relationships between human beings and all other worldly manifestations. She focuses on the relationship between perception, form-giving processes of both the material world and less substantial phenomena and different kinds of knowledge.

Maria Papaspyrou has been a trained and practicing Integrative counsellor/psychotherapist for 10 years, currently working with adolescents in educational settings. Her Integrative background has allowed her to explore various therapeutic approaches and develop through the years her own creative synthesis of healing.

Dr James Rilzy is a Lecturer in English (post-1900) at the University of Cambridge, and is Fellow of English at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. His research interests include 20th and 21st century Anglophone writing; literature and technology; recording, noise, cybernetics; counterculture and the 1960s and areas of 'occulture' such as parapsychology, catastrophism and ufology. He has recently edited two collections linked to the archives of novelist and filmmaker Peter Whitehead, and has written on terrorism, psychedelia, cult film and conspiracy for *Vertigo*, *One+One*, *Monolith* and *Transgressive Culture*

Dr Tamlyn Ryan is an Academic Skills Coordinator at the University of York, working with Widening Participation and student transition and progress. She graduated from the University of Liverpool in 2006 with a BA(Hons) Sociology and Social Policy, before commencing an ESRC-funded 1+3 Studentship at the University of York. Her research interests have focussed on alternative spirituality, such as paganism and the Psychic Spiritual Milieu and the internet. Tamlyn's doctoral research, completed in 2012: *Virtual Spirituality: The Negotiation and (Re)-Presentation of Psychic-Spiritual Identity on the Internet*, is an autoethnographic approach to alternative spirituality on the internet

Andy Sharp runs English Heretic, a creative organisation dedicated to the exploration of our occult landscapes and the commemoration of tragic figures. Combining music and writing English Heretic draws influence from horror films, dystopian fiction, magic and surrealism. English Heretic have published numerous records and books since its inception in 2003, including studies of the disturbing coincidences surrounding the deaths of filmmaker Michael Reeves and pilot Joe Kennedy Senior, two books of speculative metafiction entitled *Wyrd Tales*, and a psycho-historical report into the attempted assassination attempt of Princess Anne, and their latest release *Anti-Heroes*, an exploration of six Black Plaque recipients. Andy has also lectured on art and the occult. Outside his creative pursuits, he has recently completed his masters in Neuroscience.

Shannon Taggart is a photographer and independent researcher based in Brooklyn, NY, USA. Her photographs have been exhibited and featured internationally including the publications TIME, New York Times Magazine and Newsweek. Her work has been recognized by Nikon, the Inge Morath Foundation, American Photography, the International Photography Awards and the Alexia Foundation for World Peace. She curates a lecture series about the science and aesthetics of the miraculous at Observatory Room in New York. Currently, she is working on a book about Spiritualism and physical mediumship.

Mark Valentin wrote for *Book & Magazine Collector* for 15 years, mostly on the obscurer authors. He edits *Wormwood*, a journal of the literature of the fantastic. He's also the author of biographies of the writers Arthur Machen and Sarban, and several collections of short stories. His fiction has been published internationally and according to *The Washington Post*, he's "a superb writer, among the leading practitioners of classic supernatural fiction".

Dr Jon Wenzel is a sonic artist and researcher. He completed his PhD at Keele University with supervisor Rajmil Fischman, which explored the composition of sonic artworks (electroacoustic music and related projects) based on altered states of consciousness. His research interests include computer music composition, interactive performance systems, visual music, video games, electronic dance music, biofeedback technology and altered states of consciousness. A central theme is the geometric forms seen in hallucinations, and how these can be reflected using computer sound and graphics. He has taught at Keele University, Manchester Metropolitan University, and is currently a Postdoctoral Researcher at Glyndwr University

Dr David Gordon Wilson is a former partner in a City of London law firm, which involved spending ten years living and working in the Middle East. Getting bored with that, David returned to the University of Edinburgh to read divinity, subsequently embarking upon a PhD in religious studies, entitled '*Spiritualist Mediums and other Traditional Shamans: towards an apprenticeship model of shamanic practice*' (2011). The ideas behind the PhD thesis developed in part from David's participation in the development circle at Portobello Spiritualist Church in Edinburgh; as well as his academic interests, David is a working medium at Spiritualist churches in the UK, with occasional trips to Canada. Until he moved to London earlier this year, David was President of the Scottish Association of Spiritual Healers. In 2010, David contributed a chapter entitled 'Waking the Entranced: Reassessing Spiritualist Mediumship Through a Comparison of Spiritualist and Shamanic Spirit Possession Practices' to Schmidt, B. A. and Huskinson, L. (eds.), '*Spirit Possession and Trance: New Interdisciplinary Perspectives*', (Continuum Advances in Religious Studies).

David's thesis was published by Bloomsbury earlier this year under the title '*Redefining Shamanisms: Spiritualist Mediums and other Traditional Shamans as Apprenticeship Outcomes*'. David has presented various papers at conferences in the UK, US, Canada and Australia; he has also lectured at Edinburgh on the Sociology of Religion and on the History and Sociology of Spiritualism. David is currently writing a novel.

WEBLINKS

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Sara MacKian - <http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/EverydaySpirituality/>

James Riley - <http://residual-noise.blogspot.co.uk/>

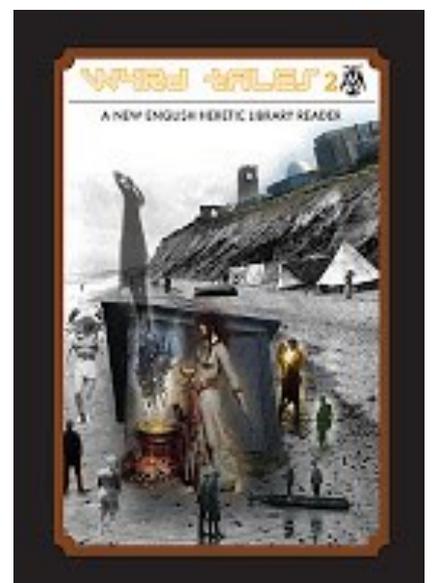
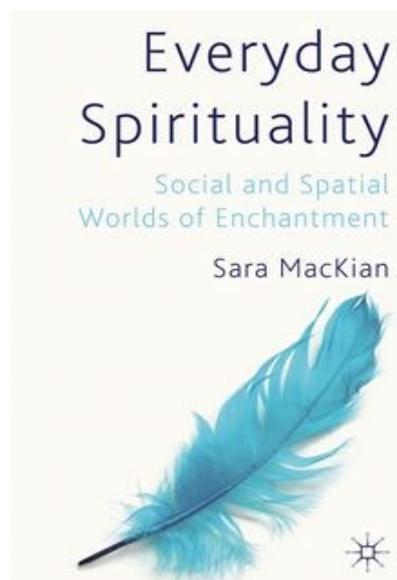
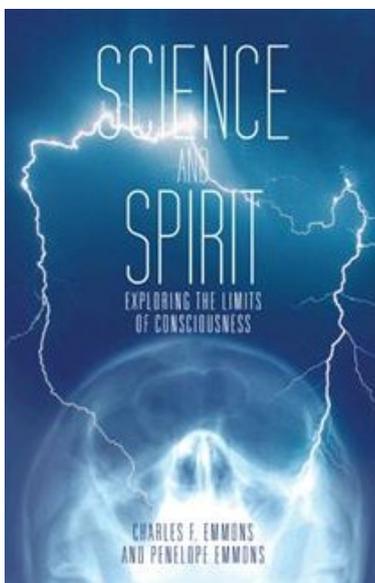
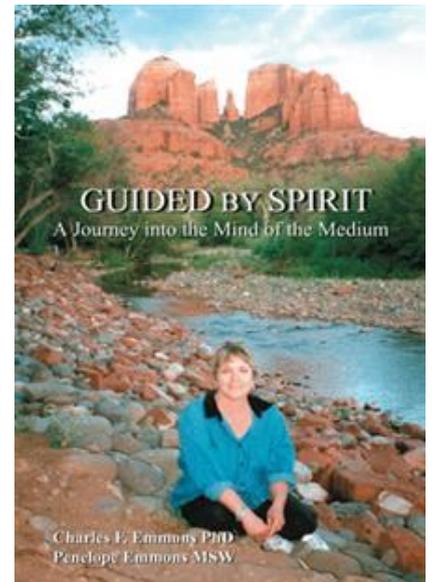
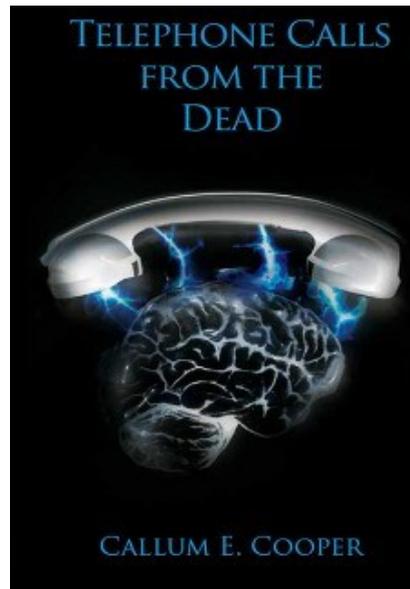
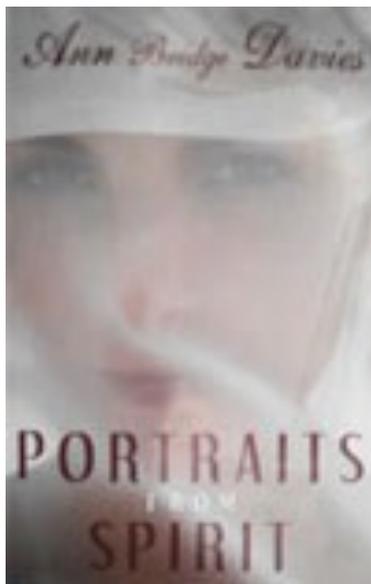
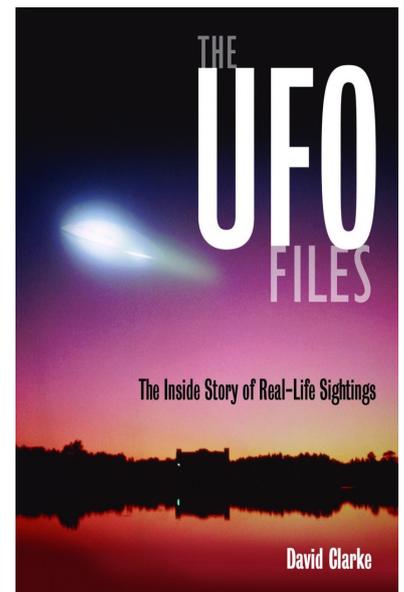
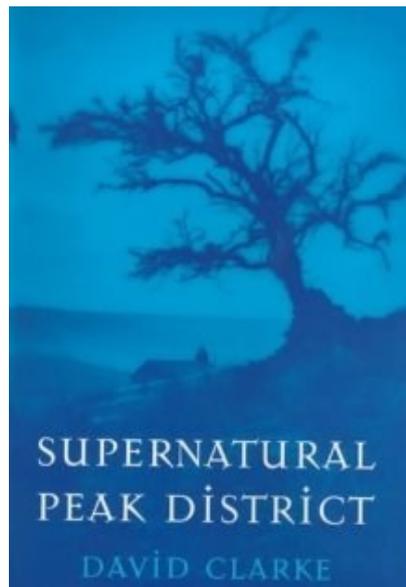
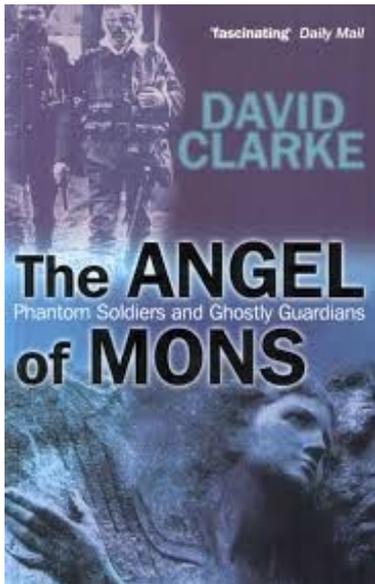
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