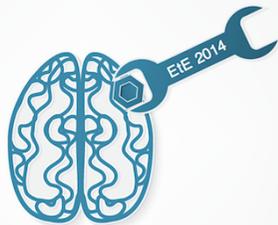


GETTYSBURG COLLEGE AREA MAP



Extraordinary Happens.



Sixth Annual Exploring the Extraordinary Conference
Gettysburg College • Gettysburg, PA • March 21-23, 2014

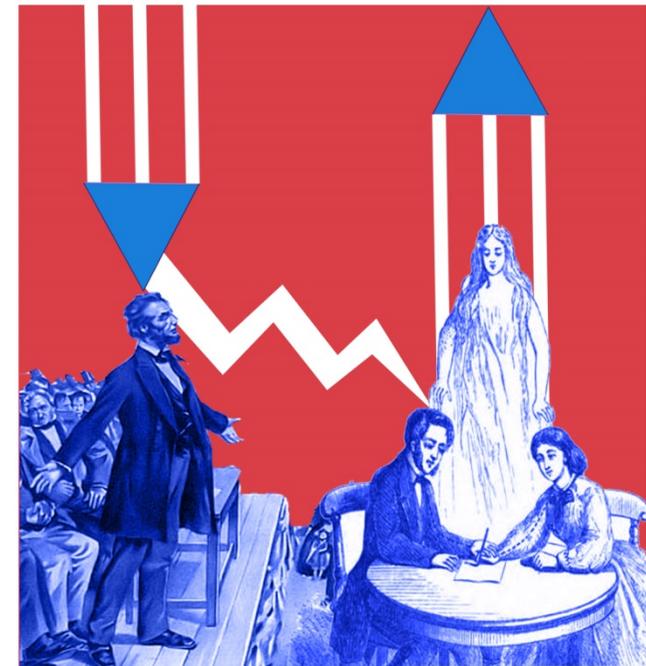
Exploring the Extraordinary 6 is being held at the buildings highlighted on the map.
 Δ Talks and coffee takes place at **Pennsylvania Hall (Lyceum)**, 33 on the map.
 Δ The **Keynote by Dr Julie Beischel** takes place on Friday at 4:30 p.m. in **Brendenbaugh (Joseph Theatre)**, 30 on the map.

EtE 6 PROGRAM
 Program design & layout:
 Christopher Laursen
 Cover art: Andy Sharp
 Graphic (left): Marcel Cairo

**EXPLORING THE
 EXTRAORDINARY 6**
 GETTYSBURG COLLEGE
 GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
 21-23 MARCH 2014

PROGRAM(ME)

ETENETWORK.WEEBLY.COM



FRIDAY, MARCH 21	
09.00	REGISTRATION: Pennsylvania Hall (Lyceum)
10.00	INTRODUCTION
10.10	Of Thy Neighbour: Investigating who and what's next door in cases of hauntings Christopher Laursen, University of British Columbia
10.40	From 'Weekend Warriors' to Paranormal Researchers: Identity, Performance, and Experiential Meaning in Ghost Hunting Stephanie Boothby, University of Florida
11.10	COFFEE BREAK
11.30	Healing from within: The story of moving beyond chronic illness by combining hypnosis with Spirituality Hayley McClean
12:00	From Housewife to Paranormal Researcher: Investigating Electronic Voice Phenomena and Instrumental Trans-Communication Donna Sinclair Hogan
12:30	Willy Wonka and the Afterlife Machine: Re-energizing the scientific method with a dash of madness Marcel Cairo
1:00	LUNCH
2:30	Ectoplasm, Somatisation and Stigmata: Physical Mediumship as the Development of Extraordinary Mind-Body States Jack Hunter, University of Bristol
3:00	Questions about Interacting with Invisible Intelligences Prof Imants Barušs, University of Western Ontario
3:30	The mechanics of spirit communication Dr Fiona Bowie, King's College London
4:00	COFFEE BREAK
4:30	KEYNOTE: Breidenbaugh (Joseph Theatre) A Scientist Among Mediums: Intriguing Findings from 10 Years of Laboratory Research Dr Julie Beischel, Windbridge Institute

DINNER ANNOUNCEMENT



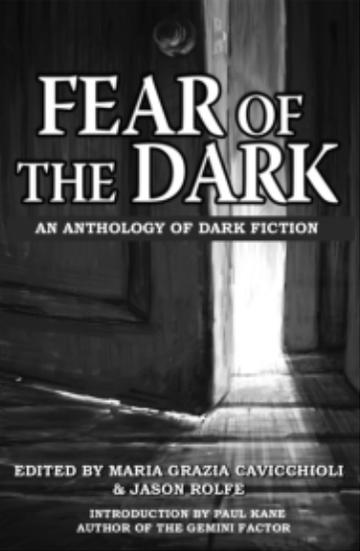
extraordinarium
DIGITAL PRESS & JOURNAL

journey through the extraordinary, the fantastical and the supernatural

Our online journal, edited by historian and writer Christopher Laursen, features indepth articles, interviews, and accounts from around the world. The digital press, newly launched this year, publishes and distributes ebooks on themes of the extraordinary, both fiction and non-fiction.

www.extra-ordinarium.com   /xtraordinarium

**HORROR BOUND
PUBLICATIONS**



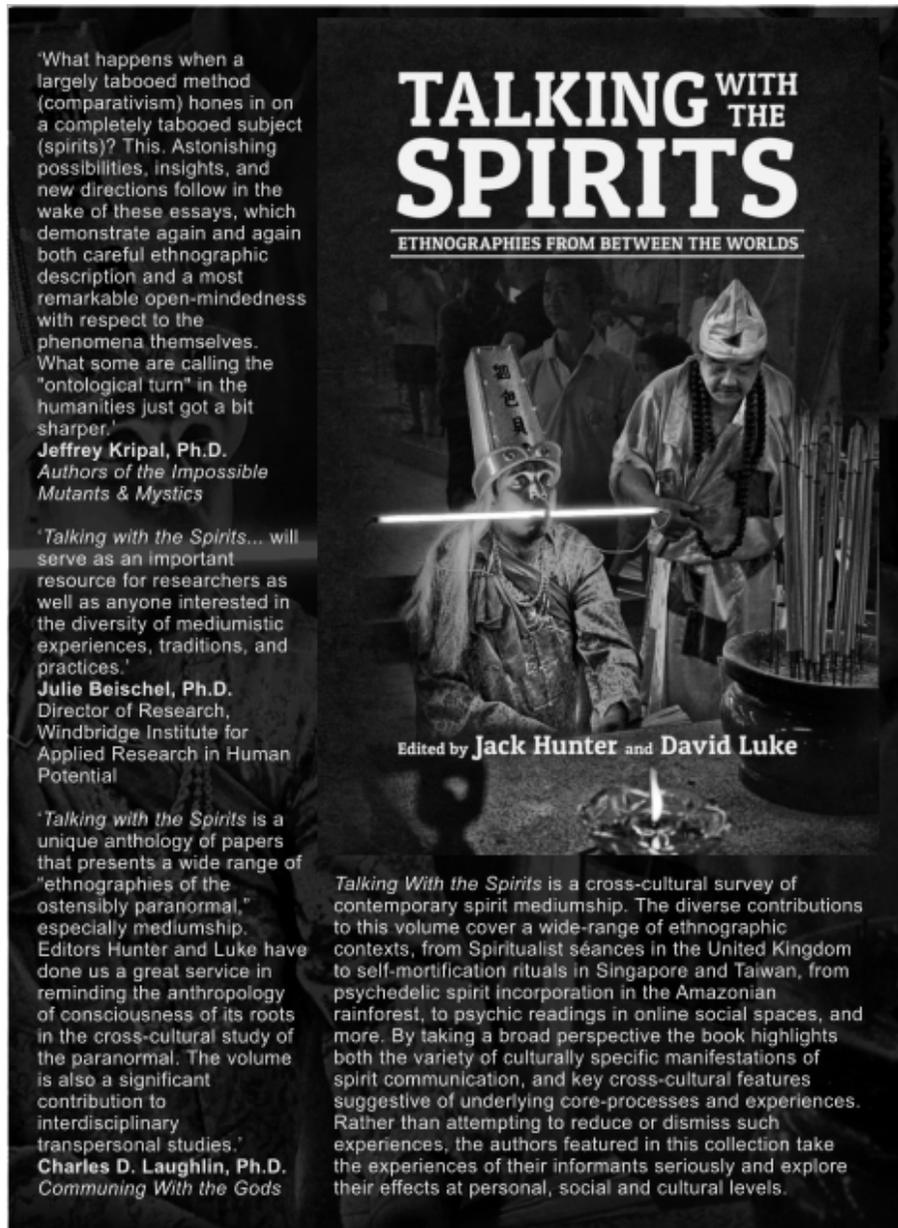
Extraordinarium Digital Press is very happy to announce the first ebook it is distributing.

Published by **Horror Bound Publications**, *Fear of the Dark: An Anthology of Dark Fiction* is edited by Maria Grazia Cavicchioli and Jason Rolfe, and features 20 spine-tingling, literary tales by both established and emerging writers, including Christopher Fowler, Lisa Mannetti, Paul Kane, Mark Leslie, Angel McCoy, and Mary A. Turzillo. This anthology equates to 300 pages of engaging and eerie short fiction!

You can get this ebook worldwide via Kobo, Amazon, and Apple iBookstore/iTunes.







SATURDAY, MARCH 22	
Pennsylvania Hall (Lyceum)	
10.00	The Phenomena of RED: Signatures in Sound and Sense Rebecca E Davies, London College of Communication
10.30	Visions of Interiority Dr Donnalee Dox, Texas A&M University
11.00	COFFEE BREAK
11.20	Structural Analysis and the Betwixt and Between Dr George P Hansen
11.50	Thinking Beyond the "Primitive": Exclusionary rhetoric and cosmological blind spots in Parapsychological history Dr Darryl Caterine, Le Moyne College New York
12.20	Jamesian Methodological pluralism and exceptional experiences Erika A Pratte
12.50	LUNCH
2.00	Reimagining Christianity: What happens when a Washington DC Attorney spends his spare time doing automatic writing? Dr David Gordon Wilson
2.30	Dreams, Metaphor, and GIS: How a turn of the century Canadian Spiritualist is informing research into historical ecology one-hundred years later Dr Rick Fehr, University of Western Ontario
3.00	The Gettysburg "Memoryscapes" of War: Layers of Spiritualist Absence and Ghostly Presence in the Heterotopia of a "Haunted Battlefield" John G Sabol, Ghost Excavation Research Center
3.30	COFFEE BREAK
4.00	Encouraging Critical Thinking in Exploring the Extraordinary Dr Jennifer Lyke, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
4.30	The Extraordinary Project Suzanne Clores

DINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

SUNDAY, MARCH 23	
	Pennsylvania Hall (Lyceum)
10.00	Haunted by the Past: An exploration of how historical assumptions have influenced modern-day investigation of the Survival Hypothesis Chase O'Gwin, University of West Georgia
10.30	Military institutional response to anomalies and social psi: The Belgian Air Force, 1989-1990 Dr Eric Ouellet, Canadian Forces College
11.00	COFFEE BREAK
11.20	Communication across the Chasm: Experiences with the Deceased Dr John Napora, University of South Florida (read by Dr Hannah Gilbert)
11.50	Photographing Spiritualism Shannon Taggart
12.20	It's OK Going Native: The Emotion Management of a Sociologist Exploring the Embodied Emotional Labour and Ethics of Extra-Sensory Work Sarah Metcalfe, University of York
12.50	CLOSING REMARKS
1.00	LUNCH

BATTLEFIELD TOUR DETAILS

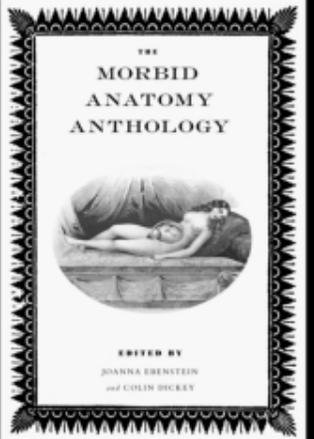
DETAILS ON TRANSPORTATION

THANK YOUs



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SHANNON TAGGART WILL BE FEATURED IN...
The Morbid Anatomy Anthology—edited by Joanna Ebenstein, Creative Director of the Morbid Anatomy Museum and founder of Morbid Anatomy, and Colin Dickey, Managing Director of The Morbid Anatomy Museum—will be ready to ship April, 2014. The 500 page, lavishly illustrated, hardbound and full color book features 28 essays based on some of the most memorable lectures hosted by Morbid Anatomy since 2008.



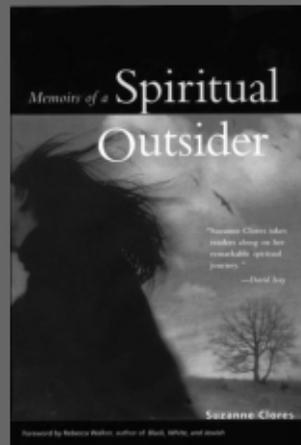

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'The Extraordinary Project is an online collection of our most unusual human experiences. I started this project once I realized coincidences, premonitions, and odd types of "knowing" happen to all of us across cultures. I hope to gather 100,000 anecdotes to better understand their role in our lives.'

- Suzanne Clores

The EXTRAORDINARY Project

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by Suzanne Clores

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"Clore still wonders if there are others out there like herself, quietly carrying out an individual spiritual quest."

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"The timeless journey of a young woman searching for a larger and deeper life."

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CALL FOR PAPERS

3rd Ghost Excavation Conference Bedford, Pennsylvania June 27 – 29, 2014

The 3rd "Ghost Excavation" Conference will occur in Bedford, Pennsylvania on June 27-29, 2014. The theme of the conference will be the ethno-archaeology of hauntings, the continuing remains of an afterlife conscious mind in a stratigraphy of memory in haunted spaces. We are looking for researchers and field investigators whose studies and work go beyond the world of the "paranormal" and "traditional ghost hunting". Suggested topics include (but NOT limited to) papers and research on:

- Theatre/archaeology • Ethno-history • Anthropology of Performance • Psycho-geography
- Archaeology of "Haunted" Battlefields and Conflict Archaeology • "Ghost Culture"
- Phenomenology of Haunted Space • "Ghosts of Place" • Semiotics of a Cultural Haunting
- Acoustemology of a Haunted Landscape • Site-Specific Performances in Haunted Space
- Altered States, "Battle Trance" and Battlefield Hauntings • Spectrality and Hauntings
- Sociological Parapsychology • Archaeologies of Interactive Past Presence • Liminality
- Geopsychic Architecture • Ethnography of Communication in Haunted Space
- Technology of Memory and Spiritization • Applied Ghost Excavations (A.G.E.)

If you are interested in speaking, or attending the conference, please see **Mary Becker** or **John Sabol** at this conference for more details.

"The terrible gift that the dead make to the living is that of sight, which is to say foreknowledge; in return, they demand memory, which is to say acknowledgement."

L. Sante, Evidence (1992)

Check out these books (& more) on Gettysburg by John G. Sabol, Jr.



ghostexcavation.com

C.A.S.P.E.R.

ABSTRACTS

FRIDAY

10:10

Of Thy Neighbour: Investigating who and what's next door in cases of hauntings

Christopher Laursen, The University of British Columbia

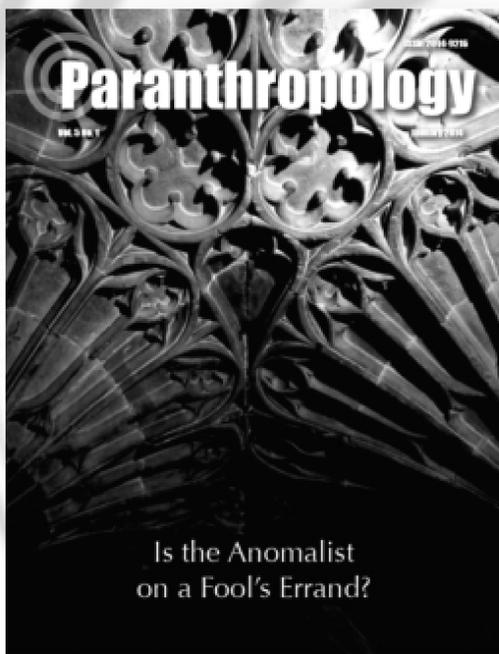
In the first season of the FX television series *American Horror Story*, the unstable Harmon family move into a massive Los Angeles house that is haunted by a murderous past. The widow next door, Constance Langdon, turns out to be an integral key to the goings-on in the Harmon's home. Neighbours, though usually not as conniving as Constance, do in fact occupy an important but undervalued role in cases of hauntings and poltergeists. In the early nineteenth-century Baldoon mystery that Australian poltergeist researcher Paul Cropper and I wrote about for *Fortean Times*, flying objects, spontaneous fires, and black dog apparitions at an Upper Canada farm are blamed on a shape-shifting, gloomy widow who lives down the way. With Baldoon as the hub of analysis, I will show how neighbours become involved and are sometimes even blamed for causing hauntings. But this isn't merely a study of Constance Langdon archetypes.

Beyond the "widow next door" there exists a vast assortment of human and non-human historical actors to consider when assessing the word "neighbour" in cases of hauntings and poltergeists. When revisiting the uncanny events at Baldoon, I discovered how geographer Rick Fehr, anthropologist Lisa Philips, and political scientist Allan McDougall had been examining the greater relationships between the experiencers and a diverse array of people and things that surrounded them. From this, a far richer tapestry of the Baldoon mystery emerged. Indigenous peoples, usually depicted as peripheral or outright erased from historic Canadian settler life, emerged as integral and informative in interpreting the events at Baldoon. Exploring relationships between experiencers and their surrounding landscape, nearby burial sites, and the people in the neighbourhood provided deeper context, not only into anomalous events, but into socio-cultural, ecological, and community interactions.

To further this holistic assessment of "neighbours," I will summarize my application of it to poltergeist case studies from the 1930s to the 1980s. How did these researchers approach "neighbours" in these cases, and how might a holistic historical approach reveal more about the hauntings, community and society? My own research on Baldoon became an interdisciplinary effort in which I communed with archives, publications, a poltergeist investigator, scholars from other disciplines, a community, and the landscape itself. In essence, this process – and the consideration of "neighbours" in broader terms – elucidated an intricate network of exchange and action when extraordinary things happened.

The author thus argues that rather than avoidance or denial of subjectivity when examining emotions, especially in emotionally driven practices, the emotionality of the researcher needs to be at the forefront of the research design. Moreover this is essential for researcher wellbeing given that distant itself requires a cognitive reduction alongside a possible silencing of emotional experience which can lead to burnout. Predicating emotionality within this research and having support mechanisms in place, the author believes, serves to limit harm and the ostensible long-term flaws of over involvement.

In sum there was acceptance that this would be an emotional journey for the author but that these emotions would be used to inform the data in various ways. Accounting for emotions including 'unreflexivity' (what was not acknowledged) has indeed led to data collection that might otherwise have been ignored or not available. This paper discusses these novel opportunities and how the understanding of motivation, the concept of authenticity, the management of emotion and the presentation of oneself within extra-sensory work were all expanded through the use of these methods.



Established in 2010, **Paranthropology: Journal of Anthropological Approaches to the Paranormal** is a free on-line journal devoted to the promotion of social-scientific approaches to the study of paranormal experiences, beliefs and phenomena in all of their varied guises. The journal aims to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue on issues of the paranormal, so as to move beyond the sceptic vs. advocate impasse which has settled over the current debate, and to open new avenues for enquiry and understanding. Paranthropology is devoted to an open-minded and exploratory perspective on a wide range of experiences, beliefs and phenomena often called paranormal, supernatural or anomalous.

Is the Anomalist on a Fool's Errand?

www.paranthropology.co.uk

SUNDAY

12:20

It's OK Going Native: The Emotion Management of a Sociologist Exploring the Embodied Emotional Labour and Ethics of Extra-Sensory Work

Sarah Metcalfe, University of York

This paper discusses the author's emotion management while researching the emotive, embodied and ethical components of extra-sensory work. Emotional labour and emotion management as concepts were reflected upon to conceptualize the normative aspects of individuals participating in these relational services (Hochschild, 1983). Using these frameworks is currently providing insight into embodied emotional experience versus actual managed displays (including taught presentation styles), extra-sensory identity and the perceived and reported social implications of this work. Firm findings from this research will be reported following submission of this thesis. However it is the author's experiences that are of primary concern here.

Funded by the ESRC in the UK- ethnographic data was collected between 2008 and 2013 consisting of 39 unstructured interviews with extra-sensory practitioners and clients recruited mainly through Facebook. Participants were from UK and international domains including Spain, Finland, USA (California and Dallas), Canada and New Zealand. Leading figures in spiritualist organizations were also interviewed. 70 hours of data were voice recorded, while participant observations occurred, within two weeklong mediumship-training courses in the UK (2010) and Spain (2013). During this time the author immersed herself fully into spiritualist and esoteric subcultures. This involved various contexts over diverse locations often on a daily basis, the making of many friendships, spiritual transformations and the perceived acquiring of extrasensory abilities.

Extra-sensory practitioners were at ease about 'talking emotion'. This study nevertheless was still restricted to the researchers observations and interpretation of the practitioners reported experiences and the spirits with whom they interact with: of how they perceive and experience their emotion and that of their clients. This exposure thus was deliberate to explore biases within a field where authenticity is of significance but moreover experience should be valued. It provided the foundations upon how field notes were formulated and other data collected and to date still directs how analysis progresses.

The author has had to act with sensitivity and creative judgment cultivating often-unexpected interpersonal management throughout the research process, which was guided by ethics, their own morals and values, previous exposure and institutional expectations. Afterthoughts by researchers are common practice acknowledging flaws or research difficulties are encouraged but rarely expanded upon. Such labour then is likely to have significant unspoken personal impact as well as academic consequences.

10:40

FRIDAY

From 'Weekend Warriors' to Paranormal Researchers: Identity, Performance, and Experiential Meaning in Ghost Hunting

Stephanie Boothby, University of Florida

Paranormal reality television shows have led to a burst of interest in the public imagination about the supernatural. While paranormal research teams existed long before the popularity of these TV shows, the widespread success of ghost hunting television shows have inspired the creation of hundreds of paranormal groups both across the US and abroad. These growing communities of paranormal researchers imply that there is an interesting shift in the public mind regarding how the paranormal is conceptualized, and how it can be confronted. These ghost hunting groups represent alternative ways of thinking about and interacting with anomalous phenomena, the supernatural, and the afterlife, mediating between the realms of religion and science.

While previous studies on ghost hunting groups have focused on the controversial claim of scientific legitimacy by these paranormal research groups, few studies have been conducted by anthropologists to look at the cultural context of these groups and the meaning of experience. Ghost hunters have embraced an alternative lifestyle, where they construct their identities through their appearance and their goals, methods, and approaches to investigation. Digitally, these identities are reinforced through the groups' websites, which act as a potential client's primary introduction to and communication with the paranormal group. During paranormal investigations, team members participate in various types of performances in attempt to communicate with and document supernatural entities or anomalous phenomena. In addition to documenting evidence, the meanings of personal paranormal experiences during an investigation vary between people and between groups.

This research, conducted as an ethnographic study among ghost hunting groups in northern Florida, stems from a broader anthropological question: how do people perceive and interact with the unknown? Traditionally, religion or scientific analysis is relied upon for explanations. Ghost hunting has emerged as a third option, straddling the ideologies and methodologies of both. However, this emerging field of paranormal research goes beyond the reach of religion and science and confronts the frontier of the unknown and the unexplainable. It has rewritten social taboos, redefined our ideas about the applications of science, and taken on a consultant role that not only aims to document these extraordinary experiences, but to help the people who experience them as well.

FRIDAY

11:10 Coffee Break / 11:30

Healing From Within: The Story of Moving Beyond Chronic Illness by Combining Hypnosis with Spirituality

Hayley McClean

Hayley has had rheumatoid arthritis since her early teens and in her thirties she became interested in hypnotherapy as a way to manage the disease. Her training catapulted her decision to leave an abusive marriage, after which her 'tingly hands' started and she discovered that she can channel healing energy. She combined the two in order to self heal, which has resulted in her being in remission from arthritis for the past three years. Positive thinking is a powerful tool but when this is combined with spiritual practices (such as regular meditation and Reiki), amazing things can be achieved. Through her work she has discovered that blending a spiritual outlook with hypnotherapy precipitates and amplifies the healing process. During this presentation, Hayley will talk about her personal story, her work as a hypnotherapist, her spiritual outlook and her understanding of the human energy system.

12:00

From Housewife to Paranormal Researcher: Investigating Electronic Voice Phenomena and Instrumental Trans-Communication

Donna Sinclair Hogan

Donna Sinclair Hogan's life changed forever after receiving a voice mail from her brother-in-law four days after his tragic death - an event unexplainable by her telecommunications provider British Telecom or by science. This incident has led her into 8 years of independent research into the world of the paranormal, electronic voice phenomena (EVP) and instrumental trans-communication (ITC). Donna has studied at the Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Spiritualism and Psychic Sciences with some of the UK's most respected mediums. She feels that it is important for all paranormal investigators to study and research mediumship because the two subjects are intrinsically linked.

In this talk Donna will give a brief introduction to the 100-year history of EVP and ITC experimentation. She will share her personal story along with examples of her own evidential recordings. This will include her view that there are certain individuals who somehow become 'human antenna' that they are in fact physical mediums and produce an energy that attracts this type of phenomena. With the advancement in technology, recordings are now so varied and clear that the original classification system is outdated and inadequate.

Hugely popular in the nineteenth-century, it radically impacted scientific inquiry and popular culture before fading into obscurity. I became aware of Spiritualism as a teenager when my cousin received a reading from a medium. The woman revealed a secret about my grandfather's death that proved to be true. Since then I have been deeply curious about how someone could know such a thing. In 2001 I began photographing where that message was received, Lily Dale, New York, the world's largest Spiritualist community. I quickly immersed myself in the philosophy of Spiritualism, I had readings, experienced healings, joined in séances, attended a psychic college and sat in a medium's cabinet, all with my camera. I expected to spend one summer figuring out the tricks of the Spiritualist trade. Instead I peered into something truly mysterious. I stumbled upon a hidden world, an abandoned system with a storied history that became a resource and an inspiration for my own photographic theory and practice.

How do you photograph the invisible? Spiritualists communicate with the unseen and have always employed technology (however rudimentary) to amplify their connections. Trumpets, tables, talking boards, slates, canvases, cabinets, radios, cameras and audio recorders are used and misused in order to extend the senses and assist an engagement with the spirit world. The body of the medium becomes an instrument for reception and transmission. Like a camera or a womb, the séance room is a dark chamber for origination and development. Sitting in these charged atmospheres my thoughts focused on how to photograph these latent proceedings. The answer came when I pushed my camera to the edge of its functionality and crossed the boundary of what is considered bad, wrong or unprofessional. Chance elements and the inherent imperfections of the photographic process (blur, abstraction, motion, flare) offer an agent for the immaterial. The long exposures necessary to document séances are a catalyst, rendering time capsules from the exchange between a veiled presence and a visible body. The resulting photographs are records that seem to confirm these invisible correspondences.

Photography and Spiritualism have an intrinsic relationship. Photography's ability to trace the reflection and preserve time directly links it to mortality, Spiritualism's main concern. Both originated in the mid nineteenth-century and were popularized in the same city, Rochester, NY. Each has used the other as a tool to understand its own objective limitations and subjective complications. Photography itself is a paradox, both art and science, it serves each without the ability to leave the other untainted. The intersection between Spiritualism and Photography is a place where many opposites meet, mind and matter, heaven and earth, art and science, life and death. My pictures are meant as meditations on this riddle of liminality, the alchemy of ritual and the magic of the photographic process. They are an effort to manifest the unseen through images that contain both mechanical and spiritual explanations, requiring interpretation.

SUNDAY

11:00 Coffee Break/11:20

Communication across the Chasm: Experiences with the Deceased

Dr John Napora, University of South Florida
(Read by Dr Hannah Gilbert)

Despite beliefs that the spirit of the deceased persists after death in numerous cultures across the globe, contemporary anthropology has largely neglected such beliefs and their study in secular societies. People's accounts of experiences with the recently deceased are similarly discounted in Western societies, and the persons who have had such experiences are marginalized. In this paper I argue that neither such experiences nor the people who have them should be trivialized. Their experiences resonate with those of nonwestern peoples, and considering them as part of the human condition broadens our understanding of it, and adds to our understanding of how some in the West continue to emphasize the importance of the spirit in the face of a scientific and political economic discourse which celebrates the material and posits a spiritless universe. I describe the experiences of members of a working class family – my own -- in the Rust Belt of the U.S. with the spirit of a recently deceased family member. These experiences, including those I had, challenge dominant psychological and psychiatric conceptions of experiences with the recently deceased, because they were at times functional, disturbing to the point of being frightening, or both, and ultimately predictive and heartrending, contradicting a psychological perspective which would dismiss them as being either the result of guilt or wish fulfillment emanating from the minds of those who had them. I suggest that these experiences might be seen as indicative of a level of spiritual reality long suppressed by mainstream scientific and religious paradigms in the West, but which remains found across the globe in the form of beliefs in the persistence of ancestral spirits. The paper will make a valuable contribution to what Edith Turner (1992) has called "experiential anthropology" and anthropology's encounter with spirits and the paranormal, and because the experiences I describe were ultimately healing, the material is also relevant to medical anthropology.

11:50

Photographing Spiritualism

Shannon Taggart

I asked these spirit figures if I was seeing them or if I was seeing what was in my own brain. They answered "both."
– Eileen Garrett

Spiritualism is a religion based on communicating with spirits of the dead.

12:30

FRIDAY

Willy Wonka and the Afterlife Machine: Re-energizing the Scientific Method with a Dash of Madness

Marcel Cairo

"You should never, never doubt something that no one is sure of."

- Willy Wonka

After more than a century of research into Medium communication, are there any new frontiers yet to be explored? Have tightly controlled lab protocols brought us any closer to affirming the survival hypothesis? Is there anything we can do to reignite academic excitement in Medium Research? The answer is, "Yes!"

At the beginning of Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory, Gene Wilder, in the lead role of Willy Wonka, invites us to follow him to a world of "Pure Imagination," a prerequisite for experiencing sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures that exist within our material world, yet blossom somewhere beyond. So, what if this same recipe for discovery were applied to Medium Research? What if the scientific method was liberated from the grip of skeptical thinking and academic limitations, and infused with the madness of a Willy Wonka who takes time-worn conventions and turns them on their head by employing "Pure Imagination." What would that look like? What could we discover?

"We are the music makers... and we are the dreamers of dreams."

1:00 Lunch / 2:30

Ectoplasm, Somatisation and Stigmata: Physical Mediumship as the Development of Extraordinary Mind-Body States

Jack Hunter, University of Bristol

The process of training as a physical medium may be understood as the gradual development of extraordinary mind-body states. Taking Jon Klimo's definition of physical mediumship as the purported ability of mediums to 'channel unknown energies that affect the physical environment,' physical mediums aim to produce directly observable manifestations of spirit. At the Bristol Spirit Lodge (where I have been conducting my fieldwork), such manifestations include the production of ectoplasm, transfiguration of facial features, the movement of physical objects, and unusual bodily phenomena, such as levitation. Although mediums at the Lodge are not necessarily able to produce these phenomena repeatedly, their development sessions are geared towards their production, and it is hoped that through regular, patient, practice and training they will be able to manifest them during séances.

(...**Jack Hunter**, *Ectoplasm, Somatisation and Stigmata* continued...)

Training is understood to be the key. This paper will suggest the possibility that physical mediumship is a psychosomatic phenomenon, and that séances may function as a form of biofeedback training. The paper will explore links between physical mediumship and other psychosomatic phenomena, including conversion and somatoform disorders (which appear to manifest physiological symptoms with no organic cause), psychoneuroimmunology (which emphasises the role of psychological states in physiological healing), and stigmata, which shares many similarities with physical mediumship. This approach should not be considered an attempt to explain away paranormal phenomena, rather it is an exploration of the possible mechanisms underlying them.

FRIDAY

3:00

Questions about Interacting with Invisible Intelligences

Prof Imants Barušs, The University of Western Ontario

Scientific data gathered over the course of about the past 130 years strongly suggests that invisible intelligences exist and can be encountered in various situations. This raises a number of interrelated questions. *Question 1.* Who or what is out there? This is a call for a tentative taxonomy. Among the candidates are at least deceased human beings, various non-human beings both of low and high intelligence, aliens, morphic fields that behave in a self-directed manner, and consciousness embedded in the fabric of reality itself. The taxonomy could include a measure of the degree of confidence based on the available evidence that any of these intelligences actually exist, and the correspondence between an evidence based taxonomy and taxonomies found in religious and esoteric writings which posit the existence of beings such as angels and djinn. *Question 2.* What are the forms of interaction between invisible intelligences and human beings? This list includes at least the following: Mediumship; instrumental transcommunication; death-bed visions; encounters during near-death experiences, hypnotic regression and progression, trance states, dissociated states, drug-induced states, psychopathological states, dreams, healing, transcendent and mystical states; experiences of invisible intelligences apparently “running interference” in one’s life; and apparitional experiences in which the invisible apparently become visible. None of these is unproblematical. For instance, whereas there is robust evidence that good mediums produce correct information, it is not clear that invisible beings are the source of that information. Instances of apparent volition on the part of the deceased, for example, have been used to argue for an autonomous source for correct information acquired by mediums. *Question 3.* What research methods can be used for investigating interactions with invisible intelligences? A distinction needs to be made between scientism, a perversion of science based on a materialist ideology, and authentic science,

10:30

SUNDAY

Military institutional response to anomalies and social psi: The Belgian Air Force, 1989-1990

Dr Eric Ouellet, Canadian Forces College

Parapsychologists Caroline Watt and Richard Wiseman eloquently noted that “anthropologists and sociologists, in contrast, are not concerned with the ontological reality of paranormal beliefs. Rather, their interest focuses on the social and cultural function that such beliefs serve”. Although there are a few exceptions to such an approach to the paranormal, like the work of anthropologist David Hess and sociologist Bertrand Méheust, most research trying to integrate the possibility of the paranormal into social-level analyses was conducted by researchers who are not working within concepts and models of social sciences, such as Allan Combs and Stanley Krippner, Erwin Lazlo and Attila Grandpierre, Rupert Sheldrake, and Roger Nelson. This paper proposes a way forward for social sciences to bridge the disparities that exist between socially-relevant anomalistic events and their rigorous study through approaches that are compatible with the findings of modern parapsychology. In particular, the notion of social psi is proposed to establish such a bridge.

To illustrate the possibility of integrating the parapsychological concept of psi into sociology (social psi), this paper analyses a historical case study of the UFO incidents over Belgium in 1989-1990. In late 1989 and early 1990, Belgium experienced a wave of UFO sightings, involving over a thousand witnesses and at one point a UFO was tracked simultaneously by three NATO radar stations and chased by two F-16 jet fighters. The object exhibited extraordinary manoeuvring capabilities before vanishing mysteriously. The Belgian Air Force opened an official inquiry, and concluded that the event was unexplainable.

The illustration uses the Model of Pragmatic Information (MPI) developed by parapsychologist Walter von Lucadou, originally to study recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK). The MPI poses that psi is the outcome of meaningful but non-local correlations embedded in psycho-social dynamics. By extending the MPI to macroscopic level social dynamics, it was found that the Belgian UFO events unfolded very much like a RSPK in ways that the MPI predicts. More pointedly, the Belgian Air Force institutional response to the events, once analysed under the framework of the MPI and social psi, raises a number of questions about how societies and institutions may actually create conditions supporting, or hindering, the emergence of genuine anomalies, such as UFO waves. These questions also lead to reflections similar to the ones proposed by Jeffrey J. Kripal, following his analysis of a Brazilian UFO wave.

SUNDAY

10:00

**Haunted by the Past:
An exploration of how historical assumptions have influenced
modern-day investigation of the Survival Hypothesis**

Chase O'Gwin, University of West Georgia

In the 2012 Parapsychological Association presidential address Alejandro Parra addressed the need for new thinking in regards to the methodologies utilized by parapsychologists. This presentation aims at looking at the methods and assumptions utilized by many in the examination of the survival hypothesis, specifically in the investigations of ghosts/apparitions and haunted locations. I will present the historical overview of various instruments and methodologies used by investigators of haunting phenomenon, tracing back, as near as possible, to their origins, and present my findings while investigating the theories that such instruments and methodologies were based upon. In particular this presentation will examine the use of lighting, photography/videography, audio recordings, and other technologies being used by both so called "paranormal investigators" and parapsychologists alike. I will discuss how many of these methods and instruments appear to be scientific in nature, but, in fact, have rarely been scrutinized in a methodical way.

This presentation will discuss how, historically, many of the theoretical assumptions upon which these methods are based have also not been thoroughly explored, but are taken today simply as a matter of course. I will explore the affect which such assumptions have on trying to prove and/or correlate the presence of a disincarnate spirit through the use the data gathered from such methods. Examples of aforementioned assumptions include the source of EVPs; alternative implications of orbs as seen in photographs and videos; what are EMF detectors really measuring; the usefulness of "going dark" during an investigation, and others. It will be discussed how such methods and instruments are not necessarily useless or wrong, and may, in fact, be measuring what researchers are intending to measure. However, until the methods have been brought under methodological scrutiny, they ought to be subject to suspicion. Alternative assumptions will be presented and explored, and an overview of some of current research that is underway in investigating some of these methods and instruments.

which involves a logical search for truth based on empirical evidence, but admitting first-person methodologies, state-specific sciences, and non-rational forms of knowledge. *Question 4.* What is the scope of influence of invisible intelligent beings on physical manifestation? This seems to range from no effect to various forms of mental impression, to different kinds of poltergeist activity and remote influencing, including healing. There also appears to an ethical valence associated with such influences ranging from pathological possession to prosocial behaviour. *Question 5.* What benefits could accrue from interactions with invisible intelligences? As humanity, we face a number of planetary crises today, including a population explosion, environmental degradation, and widespread wars and cruelty. Our political, financial, military, scientific, and cultural leaders have been unable to slow our self-destruction. In addition, we have been unable to resolve widespread existential angst. Are there ways in which interactions with invisible intelligences could ameliorate such problems? The purpose of this talk is to ask these questions as a way of organizing the results of past research and structuring the work that needs to be done.

3:30

FRIDAY

The Mechanics of Spirit Communication

Dr Fiona Bowie, Afterlife Research Centre & King's College London

One of the criticisms levelled at purported communications with spirits is that we don't know how the process works. The mechanics of spirit communication are outside currently understood scientific paradigms and the content of the messages is often suspect or inaccurate. In this talk I examine the process of spirit communication as seen both from the perspective of the person, or in the case of electronic transcommunication, the machine, that receives the message and from the perspective of the spirit communicator. The reported difficulties from the spirit side of working through a physical or clairvoyant medium, or of trying to impress their message through dreams and seeming coincidences, for instance, can help us appreciate why spirit communication might not always be accurate or complete. This fact in itself should not be seen as casting sufficient doubt to dismiss the entire process. What emerges is a picture of experimentation on 'both sides', a dynamic process which has and will continue to grow and develop over time.



KEYNOTE

DR. JULIE BEISCHEL

**A SCIENTIST AMONG
MEDIUMS:
INTRIGUING FINDINGS
FROM 10 YEARS OF
LABORATORY RESEARCH**

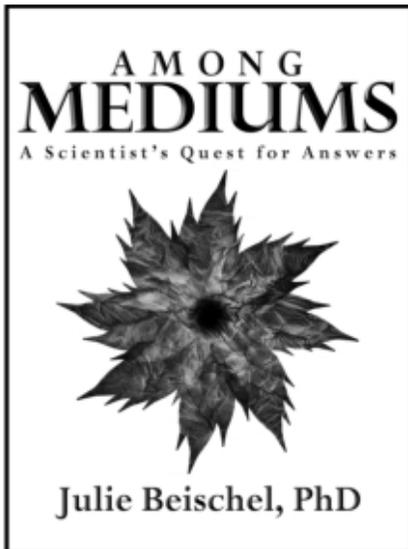
**FRIDAY AT 4:30
BREIDENBAUGH
(JOSEPH THEATRE)**

Julie Beischel, PhD, co-founded the Windbridge Institute for Applied Research in Human Potential with her husband Mark Boccuzzi. There, she is Director of Research.

She served as the William James Post-Doctoral Fellow in Mediumship and Survival Research and Co-Director of the VERITAS Research Program at the University of Arizona. When the funding ended and that research program closed, Dr. Beischel moved the research and the screening and training of prospective research mediums to the Windbridge Institute in January of 2008.

Dr. Beischel's academic training in several interdisciplinary scientific fields allows her to design and apply traditional research methods to investigating more unconventional topics of study.

Larry Dossey, MD, calls Dr. Beischel "a courageous, innovative pioneer" and found her new book *Among Mediums* to be "science writing at its best."



www.windbridge.org

processes, regardless of whether those prejudices are rooted in materialist or dualist perspectives. Students learn that tolerating ambiguity is an intellectual and emotional skill that is integral to substantive critical thinking about extraordinary experiences. Recommendations for increasing the amount and improving the quality of education regarding extraordinary experiences are included.

4:30

SATURDAY

The Extraordinary Project

Suzanne Clores

The Extraordinary Project is inspired by the truth that coincidental and other hardto-explain connections are common to all human beings across cultures. The online forum (www.suzanneclores.com/extraordinaryproject) invites people of all backgrounds and beliefs to share their extraordinary stories and view them in the greater context of universal experience.

A few years ago, I realized I had a long history of extraordinary experience; a few years later, I recognized that most people have had, and remember, at least one interaction with the extraordinary. Conversation about this aspect of human experience, however, is limited at best. There exists little mention of improbable circumstances in contemporary fiction or narrative nonfiction, unless it is accompanied by a healthy dose of skepticism. In many parts of the world, the mind is culturally trained to deny or devalue an extraordinary incident immediately after one occurs. This denial has dominated any intelligent discussion of the extraordinary in popular conversation, with the exception of paranormal television shows and science fiction literature. Certainly, these genres deserve to exist, but why at the expense of a real conversation thread in mainstream culture.

This talk/screening will discuss/showcase the personal narrative of the extraordinary experience as I have gathered through my field work, and the range and role of extraordinary narrative in our cultural growth.

(...**John G. Sabol**, *The Gettysburg "Memoryscapes" of War* continued...)

past and what is perceived to occur there today. This problem of "ethnographic displacement" haunts the marketing and promotion of the contemporary "Gettysburg Experience". It is a problem that has been addressed by various Civil War historians. According to one of these historians, Thomas DeJardin, "the truth about Gettysburg is buried beneath layer upon layer of flawed human memory". In my talk, I will "excavate" this "stratigraphy of memory" and "unearth" the reality of what really haunts this landscape. This will be presented through a series of culturally-constructed templates, contextual to the ethno-history of particular Gettysburg temporalities.

SATURDAY

3:30 Coffee Break / 4:00

Encouraging Critical Thinking in Exploring the Extraordinary

Dr Jennifer Lyke, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

Extraordinary experiences are insufficiently addressed in undergraduate education. When they are addressed, they tend to be glossed over and explained away in simplistic terms, which is sometimes characterized as "critical thinking." Critical thinking, currently a buzzword in academia, is sometimes used as a covert method to indoctrinate students into the dominant worldview. This issue is explored as it applies to the study of extraordinary experiences. The presentation is based on several years of teaching an undergraduate course exploring various states of consciousness. The course emphasizes critical thinking about extraordinary experiences such as near death experiences, mystical experiences, out of body experiences, etc.

This presentation describes two typical student perspectives, essentially materialist or dualist, from which students tend to approach ambiguous issues. The class attempts to help both categories of student effectively explore extraordinary experiences by challenging assumptions and raising awareness regarding sociocultural bias. The process requires students to develop relatively sophisticated skills such as understanding categories of empirical evidence, including subjective experience, and the scientific method. Alien abduction experiences and out of body experiences serve as examples of extraordinary experiences that require cognitively complex interpretations. Each is potentially explainable by materialistic or paranormal means, and well-regarded researchers have drawn both conclusions based on the variety of data. Therefore students are challenged to weigh the evidence for themselves as opposed to uncritically adopting the position of a particular authority figure or the society at large.

Critical thinking about extraordinary experiences ultimately requires students to carefully consider evidence as objectively as possible and resist drawing conclusions based on emotional reactions or irrational thought

10:00

SATURDAY

The Phenomena of RED: Signatures in Sound and Sense

*Ann Bridge Davies, University of Derby &
Rebecca E Davies, University of Brighton*

Wassily Kandinsky was "The man who heard his paintbox hiss": "One Day I must be able to improvise freely on the keyboard of colours: the row of watercolours in my paintbox"

"I was teaching colour as Head of Art in Liverpool. Suddenly I heard a child cry out in anguish. The study which had been set was to draw around the hands and paint the image. The girl had painted her overlapping hands red... the scream came from the memory of her mother stabbed to death. The red hand became her mother." Ann Bridge Davies

Is RED just a colour, or does it have an existence of its own. Converted by the brain into colour, RED is usually thought of as something to be seen, not heard or felt. But what if RED is more than that. What if RED has a sound, an emotion, or even a sensation? Using case study analysis RED has been explored as sound, sensation and emotion, developing a sonic, visual, or textual alphabet relevant only to RED. The presentation will demonstrate the findings of an analysis of RED as a sonic value as well as a sensate experience relevant to the subjects taking part.

10:30

Visions of Interiority

Dr Donnalee Dox, Texas A&M University

In modern lives characterized by distractions and saturated with stimulation, the sense of an "inner life" has emerged as an exceptional experience. In practices ranging from sitting meditation to trance dancing, people cultivate experiences such as "inner peace" or feeling internally "centered." Visual images help construct an epistemology of interiority, though imagery is rarely thought of in this way. This paper explores genres of images for interiority to answer two central questions: What is our visual vocabulary for an "inner" life? What epistemological statements do visual images make about the experience of interiority?

The Mind as the Body's Inner Life The first part of the paper looks at four genres of visual images in which interiority is a mental phenomenon. Each genre posits a specific understanding of interior experience. In the first genre, a homunculus or "ghost" operates the machinery of the body and reflects the external world. The second genre shows bodies sitting cross-legged in meditation and posits the exterior of the body as the shape of an unseen inner

(...*Dr Donnalee Dox, Visions of Interiority* continued...)

life. The third genre shows bodies subjected to technologies that will reveal the neural correlates of internal experience: heads covered in electrodes and bodies sliding into fMRI machines. The final genre visualizes the experience of interiority as a map of brain activity, literally envisioning the mind as one part of the physical body. In different ways these images construct interiority in the language of mind-body dualism.

Conscious Bodies The second part of the paper explores images of interiority that involve the entire body and posit the experience of an inner life as non-dual consciousness. The first genre derives from the bio-mechanics emphasized in modern postural yoga, which present the musculature of the entire body as a person's experiential inner life. The second genre of images comes from visual artwork associated with meditative dance and neo-shamanic practices. These nonrepresentational images attempt to capture a spiritual component to inner experience. The third genre, which I am currently building, models the holistic health of mind, body, and spirit. I will suggest that imagery associated with holistic health offers one of the most vital ways for imagining interiority in modern cultures. In the visual language of these three genres, interiority involves the brain and the peripheral body, the mind as the agent of consciousness, and allows for the experience of "spirit."

SATURDAY

11:00 Coffee Break / 11:20

Structural Analysis and the Betwixt and Between

Dr George P. Hansen

Earlier societies used ritual to control, influence, and channel paranormal/supernatural forces and myth to understand and describe those forces. Thus the study of ritual and myth should give insight into the nature of the paranormal (aka preternatural, supernormal, anomalous). Many scientists see rituals as superstitious behavior and myths as stories for children—topics unworthy of serious consideration. Even in parapsychology and psychical research the two topics receive scant attention.

In the 1960s and 1970s, significant advances were made in the study of ritual with Victor Turner's work on concepts of liminality, anti-structure, and communitas. During the same period, structural anthropologists Claude Lévi-Strauss and Edmund Leach made substantial progress in explaining myth.

Anthropologists had recognized that earlier cultures often used binary classification schemes. The notion of binary oppositions is a key idea of structuralism and is highly pertinent to liminality. Early societies identified a number of important binary oppositions, such as: life-death, god-human, heaven-earth, male-female, human-beast. Today, people typically consider the elements of these binary pairs to be clearly, unambiguously distinct—without

poet and Spiritualist, when he said of Indigenous peoples, "I think that their only home is among the spirits as we want the earth and all there is in it." The séance Leonhardt wrote about evokes a time when Canadian and American Spiritualists were obsessed with parlour tricks to gain insights into Indigenous beliefs.

This research explores Leonhardt's unpublished poetry and personal correspondence which details his personal obsession with the Indigenous spirit world. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Leonhardt's Spiritualist perspectives went beyond parlour tricks, as they were infused with what Gregory Bateson referred to as an ecology of mind and an animist perspective that is more concerned with being in the world rather than beliefs about it.

The spirit world, as expressed through Anishinaabe stories shared with Leonhardt, was fluidly connected to the physical world. This perspective, as detailed in Indigenous research and phenomenology forces one to recognize the immersion of humanity and the natural world. My paper reconsiders the notion of immersion in the research process, and the unconventional ways in which my earlier research into Leonhardt became instrumental to developing a methodology into my current research into historical ecology. To do this, I will explore the dreams, verse, and storytelling that connect people with place.

As my research is grounded in place and time, the immediate perception of both the tangible and intangible become foundational to historical and ecological inquiry. The phenomenological methodology detailed here is one in which I view the land, water, and activities in the past, present, and future as a continuum that exists over many overlapping trails of encounter and land use.

3:00

SATURDAY

The Gettysburg "Memoryscapes" of War: Layers of Spiritualist Absence and Ghostly Presence in the Heterotopia of a "Haunted Battlefield"

John G. Sabol, Ghost Excavation Research Center

Gettysburg has been called "acre for acre the most haunted battlefield in the U.S.", perhaps the world. But for most of its history, the battlefield has been the scene of a "monumental" haunting presence (numbering over 1300), and the absence of spiritualist séances and ghost stories, both now common contemporary "manifestations" in the Gettysburg landscape. Why have séances and ghost tourism become the popular cultural trope today in Gettysburg? "Edutainment" and "para-history" have replaced, in the past two decades, the real ethno-history of this landscape. The "culture of death" and the "culture of war", immersed in 19th c. Victorian mourning rituals and beliefs (of a "good death" surrounded by "domestic imagery"), have been replaced today by a "paranormal culture", and a particular "technology of memory". This has produced an "ethnographic displacement" between what happened there in the

(...Dr David Gordon Wilson, *Reimagining Christianity* continued...)

religion involving what today would be termed spirit or mediumistic communication. Obviously this suggestion is controversial for a whole host of reasons, not least because it goes against centuries of tradition (especially for Protestant forms of Christianity) and invites comparison with the Spiritualist movement (being the main locus for mediumistic activity in modern AngloAmerican society). Yet it is also the case that more mainstream Christian theologians and ministers of religion have taken an interest in mediumship, and a significant part of the appeal Spiritualism holds for Christians has been the possibility of communications from spirit verifying, correcting or amplifying Christian Scripture.

One of the forms of mediumship found in Spiritualism is that known as automatic writing, where the writer is understood to be overshadowed or entranced by someone in spirit to a degree sufficient to allow the person in spirit to use the embodied person as a means of writing. A number of texts produced in this manner have been highly influential within the Spiritualist movement, in particular those written by Geraldine Cummins during the 1920s and 1930s.

There is, however, one body of work produced by means of automatic writing which is almost unknown within the Spiritualist movement, despite the intellectual coherence and intrinsic interest of the material. The reasons for this are revealing of dynamics within the Spiritualist movement itself, and of Spiritualism's persistent but marginal status in Anglo-American society. In addition, the content of the writings reveals a unique vision of Christianity, which is of major interest in its own right, and contrasts strongly with the common perception of Spiritualism as a movement concerned with trivial personal messages, offering little of wider value. The writer of the material, a Washington DC patent attorney called James Padgett, began to produce the writings in 1914, and continued until his death in 1923. The paper outlines Padgett's channelled (and challenging) version of Christianity, and discusses barriers to its reception even within a religious tradition that acknowledges as real and valid the form of mediumship used to produce the material.

SATURDAY

2:30

Dreams, Metaphor, and GIS: How a turn of the century Canadian Spiritualist is informing research into historical ecology one-hundred years later

Dr Rick Fehr, University of Western Ontario

In 1911, a long dead Indian chief by the name of "Many Rivers" was asked if there were many "red men" in the spirit world, to which he replied 'myriads.' A poignant response to the séance was offered by William Leonhardt, a Romantic

any middle ground.

But there is a middle ground, the betwixt and between, and it has important properties. In his essay "Genesis as Myth" Edmund Leach explained: "In every myth system we will find a persistent sequence of binary discriminations . . . followed by a 'mediation' of paired categories thus distinguished." He went on to say: "'Mediation' (in this sense) is always achieved by introducing a third category which is 'abnormal' or 'anomalous' in terms of ordinary 'rational' categories. Thus myths are full of fabulous monsters, incarnate gods, virgin mothers. This middle ground is abnormal, non-natural, holy. It is typically the focus of all taboo and ritual observance." (Leach, 1969: 11.)

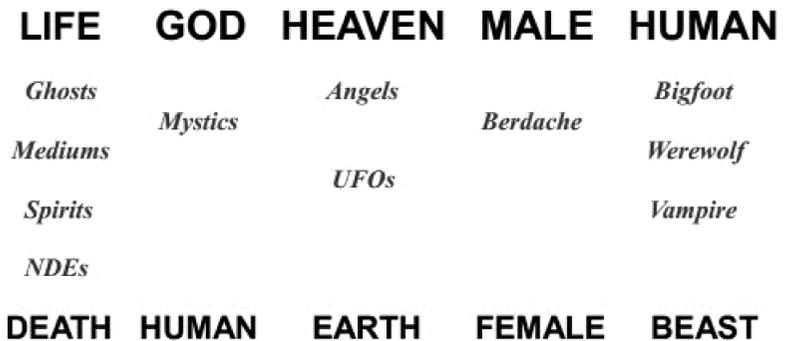


Figure – Major binary oppositions and the liminal realm between them.

In the above Figure, the realm betwixt and between the elements of the binary pairs is liminal (betwixt and between is a synonym of liminality). Each of the betwixt-and-between terms is either a paranormal phenomenon or a person closely associated with such phenomena. Many properties of liminality are also the properties of the paranormal.

Social marginality is a type of liminality. Paranormal phenomena and parapsychology are socially marginal. They are not integrated into the large, hierarchical institutions of government, academe, or industry (except the entertainment industry, which reinforces the idea that the phenomena are fictional).

Anti-structure is a synonym of liminality. Groups that attempt to directly engage paranormal phenomena on a continuing, ongoing basis rarely establish long-lasting institutions with buildings and paid staff. Those groups frequently experience para-drama and schisms.

SATURDAY

11:50

Thinking Beyond the "Primitive": Exclusionary Rhetoric and Cosmological Blind Spots in Parapsychological History

Dr Darryl Caterine, Le Moyne College

Despite his central role in establishing the discipline of psychology in the American academy, William James is today remembered primarily for his work in philosophy, rather than for his theories of the human mind. The excision of James from the field of psychology was part of a larger political and rhetorical struggle for the discipline to establish itself as a legitimate science in the Progressive Era. As this struggle unfolded, James' detractors branded him as an apologist for a "primitive" worldview that scientists of the day saw themselves as working hard to erase. The critiques focused specifically on James' psychological theory of the subliminal mind, a concept he had borrowed from his English friend and fellow psychical researcher, Frederick Myers. In short, James dethroned the supremacy of human reason as the sole arbiter of truth by suggesting, along with Myers, that legitimate insights into the nature of the world could be accessed through the promptings of intelligent cues originating from within the unconscious mind. In taking seriously claims of non-rational knowledge, James left himself open to charges of siding with the enemies of reason; he was cast, in effect, as a mouthpiece for the primitive.

James' exclusion from the canon of normal science cast a long shadow over subsequent parapsychological research in the United States, as this field, too, was spearheaded by his efforts and driven by a quest to understand non-rational ways of knowing. Resistance to parapsychology within academic science is commonly analyzed in and through Thomas Kuhn's model of disparate scientific paradigms. But the critically important rhetorical dimension of branding parapsychology as a threat to scientific reason—in short, as a species of primitivism—remains understudied. This paper will analyze the linkage between primitivism and the dominant narrative of normal science among the detractors of James. Following the analysis of Bruno Latour, I will argue that the idea of the subliminal mind, by virtue of its challenge to rationalism, constituted a species of "uncivilized" knowledge during the Progressive Era. I will also critique those nineteenth-century metaphysical narratives that left James vulnerable to charges of primitivism. Through complex narratives of cultural evolution, Spiritualism and Theosophy alike framed mediumship and psychic abilities as ways of knowing that had been anticipated long ago by a number of primitive or prehistoric races.

In my conclusion, I will suggest that in order for parapsychologists to break out of their deadlock with normal science, they must think beyond the model of paradigm wars. Both normal and parapsychological sciences constitute "acts of writing," to use Jeffrey Kripal's illuminating phrase, and as such are deeply invested in cultural efforts to imagine cosmological order. The positive findings of parapsychology offer deep challenges to notions of linear time and racial

hierarchies implicit in the dominant cultural narrative of normal science. They also invite researchers from a number of fields to resume the unfinished business of imagining truly post-modern cosmologies, an act of writing that nineteenth-century metaphysicians attempted but ultimately failed to complete.

12:20

Jamesian Methodological pluralism and exceptional experiences

Erika A. Pratte

This presentation discusses how Jamesian methodological pluralism can be effectively utilized in the context of exceptional experiences and mental health. Methodological pluralism is becoming recognized as a way to expand psychology, so that it encompasses not only positivism and operationism, but human science approaches as well, such as phenomenology and hermeneutics. However, while methodological pluralism seems to be a rather recent movement in psychology, in actuality, this trend is much like that of the early days of psychology with William James' radical empiricism. Radical empiricism embraces the entirety of the experience; it encourages attention to both sensory and non-sensory experiences, such as thoughts and emotions. It is suggested that Jamesian methodological pluralism offers a balance between qualitative and quantitative methods. The framework in which an experience is approached is tailored to the subject, hereby putting qualitative and quantitative methods on equal plains.

Lunch 12:50 / 2:00

Reimagining Christianity: What happens when a Washington DC Attorney spends his spare time doing automatic writing?

Dr David Gordon Wilson

The inclination to seek additional sources so as to add to our knowledge of what was going on in Judea and Palestine more widely two thousand years ago is both understandable and long-standing. The canonical texts of the New Testament are both inconsistent with each other, and internally inconsistent, often revealing a variety of contributors in addition to the unknowable extent of scribal error down the years. It is no great surprise that scholars (and others) have often been enticed by the prospect of finding new texts that might illuminate the gloom. We need only recall the excitement and anticipation surrounding discovery of the gnostic gospels in Nag Hammadi, or the scrolls of the Dead Sea, to be reminded of this.

A number of scholars have speculated that Christianity was originally a spirit