

# EdgeScience

A woman in silhouette is walking through a misty, brightly lit hallway. The ceiling has a grid pattern, and the light creates a hazy, atmospheric effect. The woman is walking away from the camera towards a bright opening at the end of the hallway.

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Current Research and Insights

**Perceiving Murder**

**DOD and UFOs Redux**

**Windbridge Retrospective**

**Ancient Mysticism and  
Modern Science**

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**Why EdgeScience?** Because, contrary to public perception, scientific knowledge is still full of unknowns. What remains to be discovered — what we don't know — very likely dwarfs what we do know. And what we think we know may not be entirely correct or fully understood. Anomalies, which researchers tend to sweep under the rug, should be actively pursued as clues to potential breakthroughs and new directions in science.

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**The Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE)** is a professional organization of scientists and scholars who study unusual and unexplained phenomena. The primary goal of the Society is to provide a professional forum for presentations, criticism, and debate concerning topics which are for various reasons ignored or studied inadequately within mainstream science. A secondary goal is to promote improved understanding of those factors that unnecessarily limit the scope of scientific inquiry, such as sociological constraints, restrictive world views, hidden theoretical assumptions, and the temptation to convert prevailing theory into prevailing dogma. Topics under investigation cover a wide spectrum. At one end are apparent anomalies in well established disciplines. At the other, we find paradoxical phenomena that belong to no established discipline and therefore may offer the greatest potential for scientific advance and the expansion of human knowledge. The SSE was founded in 1982 and has approximately 800 members in 45 countries worldwide. The Society also publishes the peer-reviewed *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, and holds annual meetings in the U.S. and biennial meetings in Europe. Associate and student memberships are available to the public. To join the Society, or for more information, visit the website at [scientificexploration.org](http://scientificexploration.org).

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Pam Coronado

# Perceiving Murder: Tales from a Psychic Detective

Two detectives stood quietly in the corner watching, notepads in hand as I slowly paced the room. In my mind, I was with the killer. His desire to traumatize his victims became palpable, and I could feel his intense need to control everything down to the precise detail: the environment, the victims, and his outer demeanor. Planning and precision were important to this attacker I was tuning in to, but I also sensed excitement and a wild, barely contained mania in stark contrast to the calm, controlled, exterior he presented. It was disturbing and frightening, and I needed to convey these ideas to detectives.

Physically, I was in a bedroom tracing the sadistic steps of the East Area Rapist<sup>1</sup> through one of his crime scenes in Sacramento, California. The actual crime had occurred many years earlier, yet the disturbing energy I encountered required every bit of professionalism I could muster to remain calm, focused, and do my job. “He’s military,” I told the detective. “His obsessive need for order stems from this background. I also have a visual image of him working on an engine, a truck, or airplane. He’s very chatty, I can hear him instructing his victims.” It was his voice that finally unraveled my waning composure. After hearing it in my head and describing to detectives his high-pitched, menacing voice, they decided to play an actual recording of the East Area Rapist threatening one of his surviving victims to see if it matched my internal recollection. My hair stood on end. My skin crawled, and I declined to work on him any further, fearing for my own safety and sanity. I sensed he was still alive and lurking out there somewhere, quite capable of unspeakable acts.

This past April, 11 years after my initial work on him, the stunning news broke that the elusive Golden State Killer (aka East Area Rapist) had finally been captured after 40 years of eluding arrest. I was overwhelmed with relief. In an ironic display of divine timing, the news broke on my birthday, and my phone starting buzzing at 6:00 a.m. Seeing the photos of 72-year-old Joseph James DeAngelo handcuffed to a wheelchair instantly turned the frightening monster who had taken up residence inside my head back into a human being. He



Joseph James DeAngelo

did have a military background and was working as a truck mechanic at the time of his arrest.<sup>2</sup>

Working as a psychic detective brings challenges that conventional police work does not. I often have to not only deal with the typical tasks and obstacles of forensic investigation, but also with the problems that come with applying a strikingly different way of perceiving information to an environment that expects and needs precise facts and explanations. There is also the further complication of dealing with the skepticism I sometimes encounter from the people I am working with. That said, in what follows I explain how I ended up engaging in this exotic line of work with all its difficulties and rewards and, I hope, provide some insight into the world of crime solving through the practical application of extrasensory perception.

## How it all began

On May 6, 1996, Sherri Dally was kidnapped by her husband’s mistress, driven to a remote location, savagely murdered, and dumped into a ravine.<sup>3</sup> On that same night I had a disturbing dream in which I was riding in the back seat of a car and realized my husband and his mistress were about to kill me. The man in my dream was a complete stranger and yet I understood him to be my husband and the woman seated in front of me, his mistress. I’ll never forget his face as he turned to train an intense and threatening glare on me. In my dream I argued with the dark-haired woman in the front seat. Then I saw the flash of a knife and realized I was in grave danger. Glancing out the car window, an angel suddenly appeared flying along above the vehicle and motioning for me to come with her. As soon as I made the decision to flee my current situation, I found myself flying along, in a Peter Pan scenario, with this angel toward a grand palace in the sky; I glanced back at the car and saw both the vehicle and road on which it was traveling. As I turned my attention back to the angel beside me, I felt some hesitancy and a powerful sense of reverence as we approached what I can only assume was heaven.



Sherri Dally



Dreams had always been vivid and interesting to me, but this one felt different. The dream was profound and confusing, and I wrote down every detail I could remember in a journal. At this point in my life, I was married with three children, all under the age of five and too busy to ponder life's mysteries. To this day, I don't know why I dreamed about a stranger's last moments, or why I've had several more upsetting dreams of this nature.

Three days after the dream, I opened the newspaper and was utterly shocked to see the man's face staring back at me. The article mentioned that his wife was missing and that he and his girlfriend were persons of interest in her disappearance. Not knowing how to digest this bizarre turn of events, I sat on the information and said nothing to anyone.

Eventually I swallowed my pride and fear and told the dream to my high school friend who happened to be organizing the search parties every weekend in the hunt for Sherri Dally. Those startling insights into Sherri's last moments and her location proved helpful in the search and changed the entire trajectory of my life.

### The Snowball Effect

News of my helpfulness in the Sherri Dally case quickly spread through the rumor mill and a week later I received a call from another family desperate for help. I wanted to help but had only budding talent and no training or control. Fortunately, I found Beverly Jaegers, who took me under her wing and began training me. Bevy, the daughter and sister of cops, had a group of active and retired law enforcement officers who were learning to use their own extrasensory perception for forensics. Bevy and her US PSI Squad<sup>4</sup> recognized my potential and assisted me in controlling my abilities and working with intense crime content.

With a little training, I was able to assist the family of Gloria de La Cruz. I provided enough information about the killer that Gloria's mother recognized the man I was describing and gave his name to detectives. I felt this was an acquaintance of the victim and heard his name as "Rosengren." Within weeks the LAPD identified Corrie Robinson as the killer through DNA evidence, and he was given a life sentence.<sup>5</sup> The cases continued to come, and I worked on honing my skills under the mentorship of Bevy Jaegers until she passed in 2001.

### The Energy of Crime Scenes

Visiting crime scenes in order to perceive the residual energy left there by intense emotion, fear, anger, or adrenaline is a routine part of my work in psychic criminology. Intense emotions create a loud signal, and physically standing in that energetic space allows me to replay the events, thoughts, and emotions from the past. The first time I experienced this residual energy, I was being tested live on television for a show called *Proof Positive*.<sup>6</sup> I was to work a case that was already solved so detectives could test my answers against known facts in the case. I traversed back and forth across an alley in the laid-back beach community of Oxnard, California, where an officer had been fatally shot after responding to a domestic dispute call.<sup>7</sup> His

partner was also involved in the melee. The victim's wife, who was on a ride along that fateful day, watched in horror from the squad car. As I felt my way around the site and tuned in to the different participants, I began to sort out the confusing scene, describing the events and people involved. I could feel where the victim was shot and fell to the ground. Standing in that exact location, I saw in my mind the shooter nearby, as well as the partner standing across the alley, gun drawn, heart racing, and eyes intensely fixed on the shooter. On the far side of the alley where the officer's car was parked with his wife inside, I could feel her anguish and see her run to her fallen husband's side after the shooting.

The detective gave me an accuracy rate of 95% based on my answers to 50 questions he had prepared. The crime was 26 years old when I filmed that show, and the alley had been in normal use for all of those 26 years. The surprising fact that the loud signal of violence was still present for me to perceive, despite years of people walking dogs, children playing, and cars driving through the area, taught me an important lesson about crime scene dynamics and shaped the way I worked cases in the future.

Several years after the *Proof Positive* experience, I was hired for a Discovery Channel show called *Sensing Murder*.<sup>8</sup> Psychic medium Laurie Campbell and I were selected for the show based on our willingness to be tested on our responses to three solved cases. Laurie and I provided the most accurate, consistent, and complementary answers during that testing. Week after week, for 11 episodes, Laurie and I visited cold case crime scenes in order to provide new clues to stumped detectives. We were always completely blind to the case we would be working on, even to the location we would be traveling to. Discovery Channel took great pains to make sure that our work was authentic and above question. We had no access to newspapers or computers and were kept sequestered from one another during filming. I was later told that some of the skeptical departments even temporarily disabled the websites of the cases we were working on to maintain integrity. Everything seen on camera in *Sensing Murder* was happening in real time.

The *Sensing Murder* case that once again changed my understanding of crime scene energy was called "Sister Robin." At 10:30 a.m. on June 13, 1977, Roberta Ann Elam, who was known as Sister Robin, stopped by the kitchen for a snack at the Mt. St. Joseph convent before heading up the hill for meditation and prayer. A groundskeeper found her nude body a little more than three hours later. She had been strangled and raped in broad daylight in a private spot where nuns frequently sat for prayer and silent contemplation.<sup>9</sup>



Sister Robin

While I visited the top of the hill where she had been assaulted, I felt only a blanket of peace and love. I tried different locations, but for the first time ever, I simply couldn't perceive the trauma that had occurred there. The peacefulness was so perceptible, in fact, I asked one of the nuns if they had been praying on the hill. She was stunned and confirmed that a group of them had gone up there every day for two weeks after the murder and prayed over the area and asked to remove all evil. This profound display of the power of intention changed my long-held belief that trauma energy will hang around forever.

### Working with the FBI

Chandra Levy went missing in May 2001.<sup>10</sup> Chandra was an intern at the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Washington, D.C., and it was soon uncovered that she had been engaged in a romantic affair with a married congressman, Gary Condit. My assistance was requested in August 2001, after searchers had failed to locate the missing intern. I was referred to the FBI agent working her case by another federal agent I had worked with in the past. I traveled to D.C. to assist in search efforts. I felt she was in a national park-like setting, half way down an embankment with a creek at the bottom and a dirt road or path above her. Local law enforcement insisted they had searched Rock Creek Park and so we focused our efforts in other parks in the area. Levy's body was eventually discovered by a civilian out walking his dog in Rock Creek Park in May 2002.

I've been able to visit the crime scene twice. My impressions never aligned with the concept of Chandra jogging to the park alone and being attacked by a stranger. Early on in the investigation, I was shown mug shots of Ingmar Guandique, a young man who had attacked two other women in the same park. I knew nothing about Guandique's history or the reason for the interest in him but felt he had no connection with this case. My FBI-agent partner agreed and went on to investigate and develop other persons of interest. Unfortunately, as soon as the agent retired, the prosecution moved in to arrest and convict Ingmar Guandique. My heart sank when the jury voted to convict a man I believed to be innocent. There was no physical evidence, no eyewitness, nothing except the word of a jailhouse snitch. Five years into his sentence, in a stunning turn of events, new evidence came to light that the jailhouse snitch had lied and all charges were dropped against Guandique, who has since been deported.<sup>11</sup> I am convinced this case can be solved, and I am still holding out hope.



Chandra Levy

Michelle Souliere

### Standard Procedure

I am often asked how I go about using my skills to help solve crimes. Here are some of the principles and practices I find most important. When visiting a crime scene isn't possible I use photos to tune in to the victim. Organizing impressions into who, what, why, when, and where keeps me on track and my work relevant. This is how I break down these five crucial interrogatories.

*Who:* sketching and describing perpetrators and their possible relationships to victims.

*What:* involves describing the events that occurred, before, during, and after the crime.

*Why:* involves describing the motive.

*When:* involves creating a timeline.

*Where:* involves describing the current location of a missing person or crime scene.

Describing vehicles, license plates, and assessing mug shots are also common requests. Sometimes detectives will ask me to provide information on questions they already know the answers to. Providing such verifiable facts gives the detective more confidence in my responses to unknowns and bolsters their willingness to follow up on my leads.

Law enforcement needs leads that are actionable, and I do my utmost to provide them. Describing the place of employment of a perpetrator is more useful, say, than offering that the suspect has a sweet tooth and eats kid cereal for dinner. I remain mindful of what is useful insight and what isn't, and by asking myself the who, what, why, when, and where questions and receiving impressions in the form of images, sounds, conceptual ideas, and feelings is how I keep the insight train rolling along.

Controlled remote viewing is another tool I find useful in crime cases, especially high-profile cases in which I need to remain blind to avoid becoming hopelessly frontloaded. Frontloaded means I am aware of too many facts about a case, which my logical mind can grab onto and distort, project, or override my intuition. In crime investigations where remote viewers are used, there is always someone who fills the role of project manager. This is the person who directs and manages how the viewer interacts with the team and exercises her skills. The problem a project manager must overcome is how to get the viewer/psychic to describe what is needed without becoming too consciously knowledgeable of the case to be solved. A project manager who knows how to properly set up a target in such a case is incredibly valuable. Take the Chandra Levy case in Washington D.C., a clever project manager would be able to set the blind target of "Describe the killer's place of employment at the time of the murder," without the viewer consciously knowing what they are being asked. This allows for a clean session.

### Best Practices

When a family member of a victim approaches me for assistance, I ask them to have their detective reach out to me

directly if the detective is interested in my assistance. This policy assures that a detective who reaches out actually is receptive to what I have to say and we can work together in an effective partnership. Since that first case, I have adopted the policy of not volunteering unsolicited tips and only accepting cases in which an immediate family member or law enforcement seeks my involvement. Many of my cases come from referrals of detectives or departments I have worked with in the past.

Requests come at different times in an investigation, most often when all of the hard leads have been exhausted. There have been a few instances, though, when I was contacted immediately in emergency scenarios such as a kidnapping, an autistic child wandering, an elderly dementia patient lost, or a hiker missing in the wilderness. Fortunately, these high-pressure situations are fairly rare.

Confidentiality is approached differently by every department, but generally they prefer to keep my involvement quiet. The practice of working with psychics is so prevalent that I have yet to encounter a department that has not worked with one in some capacity. I have been asked to sign non-disclosure agreements, and every department has conducted a background check before sharing sensitive case details or escorting me to a crime scene. As part of the investigative team, I am expected to handle privileged information responsibly and exercise my best judgment at all times. Confidentiality is relaxed on cold cases no longer being investigated and those that have gone to trial.

### The Work of One Reflects on All

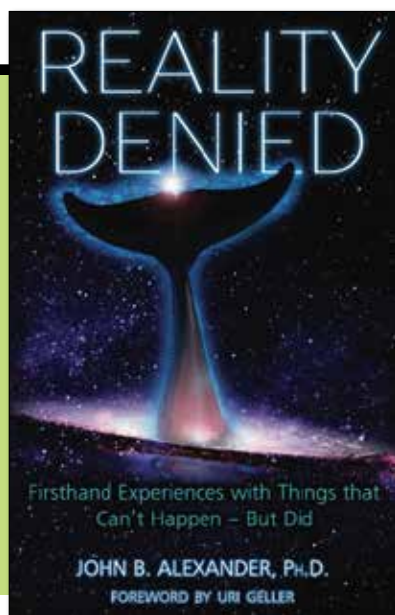
I currently teach students from all over the world using solved cases to test and instruct. Students learn to perform the specific tasks required and the ethics involved in a tricky field.<sup>12</sup> My hope is that the more highly trained and ethical psychic detectives are out there doing great work, the better it will be for the entire field and society at large.

**PAM CORONADO** is former president of the International Remote Viewing Association and currently serves as Vice President of IRVA. Pam has been working in the field of psychic criminology since 1996 when a dream provided her with the location of a missing woman. She has worked with more than 50 departments across the United States as well as international agencies and the FBI. Pam's work has been featured on the Discovery Channel, Bio, A&E, OWN, and Sci Fi.



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John Alexander

# The Department of Defense and UFOs Redux



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In December 2017 *The New York Times* broke the news about a classified UFO program that had been conducted under the auspices of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).<sup>1</sup> That effort was called the Advanced Aerial Threat Identification Program (AATIP).<sup>2</sup> Concurrently the story reported the creation of a new civilian organization called *To The Stars Academy of Arts and Sciences* (TTSAAS).<sup>3</sup> Nominally headed by a rock star, Tom DeLonge, formerly the lead singer of Blink 182, it boasts a stellar cast of former U.S. government intelligence executives and scientists, all of whom have an interest in UFOs. Many people believed this effort to be unique, and possibly a harbinger of a formal government announcement, ranging from an acknowledgement that UFOs are real to ETs are here and walking among us. Those with a conspiratorial bent suggested that the purpose of TTSAAS was to dispense disinformation and again disrupt an already chaotic field.

But what few people realize is that the DIA effort was not unique and that no major pronouncements are likely to follow this program. Rather, it was just another in a series

of inadequate efforts to investigate one of the most perplexing issues to ever confront humanity. I have firsthand insight into this because of my personal involvement in one of those studies.

## The ATP Project

The formal U.S. Air Force UFO programs, Projects Sign,<sup>4</sup> Grudge,<sup>5</sup> and Blue Book<sup>6</sup> are well documented. But in addition, from 1984 through 1988, long before Senator Harry Reid was able to earmark funding for the DIA project, I ran a similar, albeit unfunded, effort. Assuming that no one in the UFO community would file a FOIA request for such a topic, the name we employed for this project was Advanced Theoretical Physics (ATP). Participants all had Top Secret/SCI level clearances and they came from all Department of Defense services, the Intelligence Community, and civilian aerospace companies. It was literally an “old boy” network, all male, whose interest in the topic was known to us. Initially we assumed that a highly

classified UFO program did in fact exist, and that we might get our hands slapped for intruding on its territory. Most attendees assumed that some other organization or institution held the keys. Here, I must note that a number of experienced participants in both the ATP and the AATIP still believe that to be true today. It is a view I do not share.

Although the recent DIA program was funded and ours was not, it appears that both projects came to the same fundamental findings. Although there was no institutional responsibility for the subject, credible, multisensory events were documented displaying physical characteristics and capabilities that defy all known human technology. At the time of the ATP study, there were already many cases worth exploring. Unidentified craft were recorded as traveling at speeds many times beyond even today's capabilities. For example, we learned that F-86D pilot Milton Torres had approached a UFO over the UK. As he prepared to engage it with rockets, that craft accelerated from standing still to a speed in excess of Mach 10 nearly instantaneously. That was in 1957. There were reports of other craft making high-speed, right angle turns that would generate G-forces many times greater than what can be withstood by any known living entity. There were credible reports of craft tracked visually and on radar that simply vanished. Even current stealth technology cannot accomplish that feat. We were aware of a case over Iran in which U.S.-made fighters attempted to engage a UFO, only to have their weapon systems shut down. Once the fighters withdrew, their electronic systems were reactivated. That is beyond the current capability of directed energy weapons.

One disturbing case ATP looked into became known as Cash-Landrum, named for the victims, two women and a boy, who were inexplicably exposed to high levels of radiation. The source was an unidentified craft that appeared to be in trouble above a desolate country road just north of Houston. We explored the Cash-Landrum case in depth because of lawsuits initiated against the U.S. Government under the assumption that the incident was caused by an experimental craft of ours that had caused the serious injuries. The case was later dismissed.

Coincidentally, at nearly the same time as the Cash-Landrum case, U.S. Air Force personnel stationed at Bentwaters in the UK came in contact with a craft that landed outside the base perimeter. In addition to the lasting physical and mental issues the airmen experienced, the UFO left indentations on the ground, as well as residual radiation considerably above the normal background. Days later, the deputy base commander, then-Lt. Col. Charles Halt, and his team would have another encounter with an object that maneuvered through the trees away from them. This case had over 60 credible witnesses, was supported by physical trace evidence, and later was found to have radar confirmation.

Of significance, there had been several interactions between U.S. military weapon systems and UFOs. Possibly the most critical ones occurred along our Northern Tier air defense system and resulted in the disablement of our nuclear weapons. Defensively, our nuclear triad (bombers, submarines, and ICBMs) was sacrosanct. Thus, anything adversely impacting their capabilities was of grave concern. Later we would

learn that the Soviets had encountered similar problems controlling their nuclear arsenal. UFOs had acted on various sites with impunity.

The official response these incidents received is very important and offers insight into the Government's approach to these issues. As can be anticipated, incidents such as the one known as Faded Giant, which resulted in the disabling of our ICBMs, generated great concern.<sup>7</sup> Extensive research and testing of the systems was conducted, yet no plausible explanation was found to explain what had happened. (Details on this, and other cases, are covered in my book, *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities*,<sup>8</sup> as well as many other sources.)

Another similarity between the ATP and AATIP projects, though they occurred about 30 years apart, was that no central repository for all UFO data existed then as is the case now in the DoD. In my book I address a series of sightings recorded by Eskimo Scouts as they hunted seals in Alaska. Their amazing observations were written up in reports, but there was no mechanism by which they could be forwarded to interested parties. Knowing of my personal interest, an inspector general who found them stashed in a drawer provided me with copies. Throughout the existence of the ATP study, it was always the old-boy net that connected data. That meant analysts finding reports and passing them on unofficially to colleagues known to have interest in the topic. Undoubtedly, we missed the majority of them. It is my understanding that the Nimitz case made famous by the AATIP project originated in a similar fashion, through a request by a concerned senior officer. The videos had been sequestered in files. The public only learned of the incidents when the pilots began discussing the incident.

The point is that time and time again UFO cases have been reported and researched but with little, if any, resolution. UFO advocates find that explanation hard to comprehend. The common belief is that these studies are part of the cover-up by some agency that may have all the answers (or at least some of them) but which has chosen to withhold them from public view. While there is justifiable concern about releasing information on the potential vulnerabilities of our defense systems, that's only a small part of the problem. A more looming issue for most agencies is risk avoidance, including concern about possible damage to their institutional image.

### The Funding Issue

Totally misunderstood by the UFO community is how the U.S. Government in general, and Department of Defense in particular, really works. Even many employees fail to grasp the complexities involved, especially in budgeting. Yes, there has been some poor accounting, but not to the extent widely touted by conspiracy theorists. In all cases, budgeting is a zero-sum affair. There are always many people "looking for money." That means there are always unfunded/underfunded programs or projects seeking funding. That even applies to classified projects or what some refer to as the "Black World." The smaller the amount of money allocated to a project, the easier it is for the project to remain out of sight. And by small amount of money, I mean a few million per year.



All governmental agencies have clearly assigned responsibilities. Their money must be both appropriated and authorized by Congress before it can be spent. When briefing the ATP, I proposed that UFOs constituted a threat to national security. The recent DIA program did the same. That was necessary so that spending defense-related funds could be justified. Our lack of funding was not for lack of trying. My most serious attempt for funding was when we briefed the director of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) or what was known as Star Wars. At the time, SDI had an annual R&D budget of five billion dollars, the largest in DoD.<sup>9</sup> (SDI total cost estimates were over a trillion dollars.) Knives were out in many sectors attacking that funding. The director was not familiar with UFOs, which was very telling. But by the end of the briefing, he was mildly interested and potentially supportive. There was a critical caveat: he would not authorize any money to the project. The rationale was clear. He indicated that if he was caught spending any money on such a project, critics would assume he was not a good steward of public funds. And that, he conjectured, would be used as an excuse to make even deeper cuts. He felt he was already pushing the envelope with “hairy projects,” but UFOs were just too much risk. (It should be noted that SDI was cut a billion dollars that year even without our UFO project.)

It appears that the recent DIA program suffered the same demise. Funds were initially earmarked by Senator Reid, but as the program became more visible, critics came after their funding as well. The constant battle to justify funding almost always catches up, especially in the research and development area. There are critical factors facing senior government officials saddled with fiduciary responsibilities. Any project with little probability of demonstrable return on investment is vulnerable. One of the findings recommended by the 1968 Condon Report, which was commissioned by the Air Force, was that studying “UFO phenomena do not offer a fruitful field in which to look for scientific discoveries.”<sup>10</sup> While a few people associated with the DIA project believe that some progress has been made in understanding the physics underlying the observations, there is very little public evidence to support their claims. Clearly, superiors with oversight requirements were not sufficiently convinced via cost-benefit analysis when compared with other projects vying for the same funds. Within the DoD, real and current conflicts always trump *potential* threats, and everyone is competing for the same pot of money. Unfortunately, my recommendations for the commitment of funding in ATP briefings failed to convince senior leaders.

While the recent DIA study has added to our body of knowledge, its lack of transparency, i.e. publication of studies, has fostered considerable angst, and even resentment, amongst the general public who have an interest in the topic. Requiring external support, the government employed contractors, predominantly Bigelow Aerospace. Contractors are not bound by FOIA requirements and often claim the information derived is proprietary. Thus, they are not required to make their reports public. In this situation, redaction is a significant concern as many people who were interviewed were promised anonymity. The problem is that useful information is not made available except to a very limited set of participants.

The lack of transparency and central data storage is not unique to AATIP or other studies. A classic example is that of the late William Coleman, a retired U.S. Air Force colonel who had his own extraordinary UFO encounter. Later, he was the Chief of the Public Information Office for the U.S. Air Force including Project Blue Book. Upon retirement, he joined a venture with television star Jack Webb, and together they produced a series of UFO-related programs. In private conversations with me, Coleman indicated he had stashed material on over 100 cases that he deemed contained both high-strangeness and high-credibility. Though he repeatedly promised to make the information public, he carried that information to the grave. Aging researchers who possess critical data is a serious issue for the entire field.

Sightings by U.S. Government agency personnel represent but a tiny, albeit significant, portion of the recorded events around the world in any given year. What DoD brings to the table, however, are a variety of advanced sensors, some of whose operating parameters and capabilities remain classified, and appropriately so. Dominated by conspiracy theorists, the UFO community has little understanding of how these complex institutions function, while the issue of unnecessary secrecy further invigorates their confabulations. Contrary to the expectations of some people, the revelations made thus far are not part of a nefarious or massive disclosure project by the U.S. Government.

### UFOs and Other Phenomena

My own view is that UFOs are interrelated with other anomalous phenomena, including, but not limited to near-death experiences, remote viewing, psychokinesis, post-mortem communication, and even cryptozoology. Furthermore, it appears that consciousness is a key component. Veridical observations of these phenomena include both hard physical, quantifiable evidence and mental/psychological aspects. More perplexing are incidents involving temporal perturbations, such as pre- or retrocognition, and retrocausation.<sup>11</sup> The significance of my assertion is that it is indicative of the complexity of the problems that beg resolution. Each of these phenomena present multifaceted issues, especially when the totality of observations is considered. Worse, they often pose conundrums and paradoxes.

A fundamental question is what role, if any, is appropriate for U.S. Government agencies in researching UFOs or any other of these phenomena? As did I when engaged in the ATP study, the AATIP raised the issue of the threat to national security. Admittedly, that construct remains a considerable stretch, but it was necessary to justify funding the project. However, everything that is not understood does not constitute a threat. If, as I propose, phenomena interrelationships do exist, the teleological implications are huge. It infers universal, nonlocal consciousness. While of interest to governments, the pervue of such research pervades all aspects of human endeavors and strikes at the core of our individual belief systems and institutional organizing principles. In secular societies, there is no expectation of intrinsic governmental involvement in

confirming those attributes or hypotheses. There may, however, be interest in applications of certain aspects of various phenomena, such as was demonstrated by the remote viewing program. Therefore, while continued government study of UFOs may be expedient, it should be tangential to far greater research sponsored in the civilian sector. Unfortunately, cohesive and coordinated programs have yet to evolve and are often inhibited by the very people most associated with the topic.

Funding is the signal issue. It must be understood that UFOs, and all interrelated phenomena, are as intrinsically complex as problems such as AIDS or cancer, programs that have consumed hundreds of billions of dollars. While substantial progress has been made in cancer research, medical scientists remain far from announcing a complete cure. It is also important to note that nearly all of the funding for cancer research is based on an allopathic model of treatment involving pharmacologically active agents or surgery. The same effect holds true for scientific research in other areas. As an example, based on deeply held scientific edicts that are materialistically biased, billions of dollars have been spent by physicists in search of the elusive God Particle.<sup>12</sup> For comparison, my best guess is that, globally, about ten million dollars is spent annually on research into all phenomena, including UFOs, continuation of consciousness, and psi-related studies. Rather than fostering cooperation, the paucity of available funding engenders intense competition and often the jealous guarding of information. That is not a formula for success in solving complex issues.

### What's Needed

Since 1947 there have been a number of U.S. Government UFO-related studies. A few have been event-generated, such as those caused by the shutdown of ICBMs. Most have been personality-dependent, organized and executed by mid-level or senior individuals who have sufficient interest in the topic and are willing to take risks. Participation in such projects has never been “career-enhancing,” meaning one is unlikely to get promoted for such research. Many involved have found it to be detrimental to both advancement and even their health. The bottom line is that these phenomena are real, interrelated, and deserve serious investigations. It seems equally obvious that the role of U.S. Government agencies (or those of other governments) should be tangential at best. The complexity of the problems defies simple answers, and often logic. Needed are massive, comprehensive, interdisciplinary studies, encompassing the most prestigious institutions. Patterned after the Human Genome Project, but far more expensive, it should be international in scope and share data as much as possible.<sup>13</sup> As for funding such a venture, I’m not holding my breath.

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Kenneth Smith

# A Mystical World: The Increasing Acceptance of Ancient Mysticism by Modern Science

**M**odern scientists have begun accepting concepts that have long been the province of mystics. Ideas such as entanglement, unified fields, and alternate dimensions are transforming the way we look at, and live in, the world. On a mass scale, our worldview is changing. In practical application, this shift is perhaps most apparent in the fields of medical science and health, and this dynamism could be paving the way for an interesting synergy between old and new ways of approaching knowledge and gaining a more robust appreciation of life.

## Mysticism

Transcendental domains are typically the territory of religion. Within all major and most minor religions, practitioner mystics have been the scouts and educators of otherworldly orders. As structured approaches to realize mystical consciousness, mysticism is integral to religious doctrines.<sup>1</sup> Some go so far as to say that religions begin with mysticism only to become mired in politics, doctrine, and dogma.<sup>2</sup> Viewed in this light, mysticisms have promulgated valuable insight regarding the transcendent and have also come to be appreciated as perennial philosophies and transpersonal psychologies.

Mystics often tout an absolute or ultimate reality, assigning to consciousness a central, supreme reality with characteristics that are not mechanical, physical, or computable.<sup>3</sup> In turn, quantum physicists deal with probabilities and uncertainties, and portray quantum worlds more in speculative terms than in hard, indisputable facts—almost mystical renditions of reality. For example, for thousands of years mystics have routinely dealt with alternate, yet interconnected and unified, dimensions of life. And now the quantum world is being described as

having similar features such as a multiverse of parallel yet interacting dimensions. Texas Tech Professor John Davis cites that the quantum communication of faraway particles—something Albert Einstein called “spooky action at a distance”—may actually be due to interaction of nearby worlds.<sup>4</sup>

## Contributions of Mysticism

Specific branches of mysticism have bequeathed both understanding and technique to various aspects of life. For instance, Taoism and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) both originated several centuries BC with formative influences extending further back in time, and they share a philosophical foundation.<sup>5</sup> Yin yang (relational opposition), Qi (unifying force), and flux (harmony) are essential components of Taoism and TCM.<sup>6</sup> TCM has since successfully exported acupuncture, which focuses on energy flow via meridians. Research conducted at the University of California mapped meridian communication via fMRI, finding that signals were transmitted 1,000 times faster than known processes of the nervous system.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps more indicative of acupuncture’s legitimacy is that treatments are now covered by standard medical insurance.

Other eastern variations of mysticism, such as found in Hinduism, brought forward knowledge of chakras, energy centers located in proximity to the spine and responsible for various perceptions of the physical and other worlds. Chakras are also associated with different organs. The fourth chakra, for example, is typically relegated to the heart region and pertains to feeling, as well as providing a sense of connectedness and relation with the environment. This correlates with scientific research at



“A Nath Yogi” from LA Museum of Art: India, Himachal Pradesh, Mandi, 19th century.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons



圖形現兒嬰

他日雲飛方見真人朝上帝

潛龍今已化飛龍  
變現神通不可窮  
一朝跳出珠光外  
渡身直到紫微宮

神水清涼  
脫離依  
內外無塵  
長養聖胎

夫婦結子  
孕時之氣  
精其精交  
精其氣和  
其神隨加  
小俱得其  
氣



氣穴注名無盡藏  
歲也於家寂包空  
我問空中誰氏子  
他云是你主人翁

行在空財  
抱懷守確  
總稱若存  
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此時丹契更須悉母情嬰兒

“The Immortal Soul...” from *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. Harvest/HBJ, New York and London, 1962.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons

the HeartMath Institute indicating that the heart processes and decodes information and may be central to perceiving spacetime in different ways, such as the ability to scan future events.<sup>8,9</sup>

In addition, Hindu mysticism has ushered into mainstream consciousness the now-common practice of yoga, which provides many health benefits such as improving flexibility, cardio and circulatory health, enhanced respiration, weight reduction, and stabilizing metabolism.<sup>10</sup> In a study conducted at the University of Melbourne, for example, researchers surveyed 42 controlled, clinical trials. As measured by heart rate, blood pressure, heart rate variability, mean arterial pressure, C-reactive protein, interleukins or cortisol, they found positive association of yoga with the regulation of the sympathetic nervous system as well as with the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal system.<sup>11</sup> The Upanishads, Hindu manuals of mystic teaching, cover a variety of perspectives and practices such as chakras and yoga and date to the eighth century BC.<sup>12</sup>

Yet another contribution of mysticism, one that is shared by all branches, is meditation.

Thirty years ago, meditation was ruthlessly disregarded, as it didn't fit with western ideas. Since then the medical benefits have been well-documented. A review and meta-analysis of 47 clinical trials with 3,515 participants conducted by researchers at The Johns Hopkins University Department of Medicine found that meditation significantly reduced stress with outcomes relating to depression, anxiety, attention, eating and sleeping habits, pain, and weight.<sup>13</sup> Another study conducted by investigators at the University of Wisconsin's Waisman

Laboratory for Brain Imaging & Behavior and Center for Investigating Healthy Minds found a positive relationship for meditation serving as an effective therapy for chronic inflammatory conditions,<sup>14</sup> while yet other published studies have demonstrated meditation's effectiveness in addressing post-traumatic stress disorder and fibromyalgia.<sup>15,16</sup>

One meditative technique uses mantras, or repetitive words, to help quiet and focus one's mind. Neurobiologists at Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science simply used the word “one” to side-step spiritual orientations and had subjects repeat it silently to themselves. Tracking changes via fMRI, they found this exercise caused reduced activation in cortical networks associated with self-related processes. Investigators concluded that the global inhibition produced by the mantra may account for the “long-established psychological calming effect associated with commonly practiced Mantra-related meditative practices.”<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, Andrew Newberg, a neuroscientist at the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health, examined physiological changes of Muslims during prayer, a form of meditation. He found an increased blood flow to frontal lobes (planning), parietal lobes (sense of self), and the limbic system (emotions).<sup>18</sup>

Current scientific interest in concepts and practices such as these were once only in the realm of mystics, and is indicative of how far these areas have worked their way into our world. Acupuncture, yoga, and meditation are listed as topics of research and education by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, one of the National Institutes of Health.<sup>19</sup> As a result of these influences, the landscape of medical science is changing.

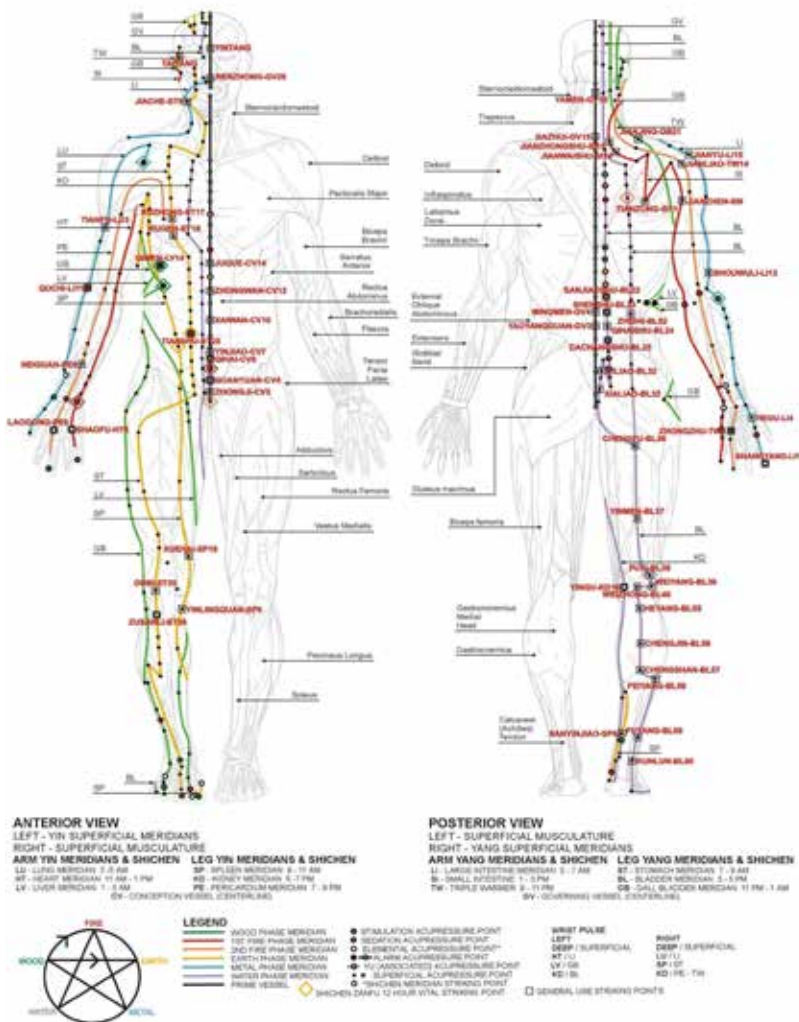
**Energy Medicine**

When the mystics' considerations of Qi, chakras, meridians, and oneness are combined, a contribution to the emerging field of energy medicine is also apparent. With Reiki, an eastern form of healing touch, practitioners often refer to chakras as a means of targeting and using energy and, like acupuncture, it deals with flows and states of energy.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, remote healing, where geographical distance between healer and subject is of no concern, is sometimes placed in an energy medicine category, while at other times it is related to spiritual healing utilizing non-local consciousness. However, the principles and mechanisms of the viewpoints are similar in that the healer capitalizes on non-ordinary conditions that affect the physical body.<sup>21</sup>

With energy medicine, resonance—or the relation permitting the maximum transfer of energy (optimal yin-yang)—offers a scientific avenue of inquiry. Likewise, quantum entanglement may help provide a scientific explanation of forms of healing touch as well as remote healing since entanglement relates to interconnectedness at micro- and macro-levels.<sup>22</sup> In all cases mentioned, commensurate with the specific healing practice, the healer deliberately cultivates intention, typically regarded as a driving force for managing energy.

Human body meridians



consciousness is exteriorized from the physical body, the OBE itself being an extreme event where, like a NDE, one might actually visit other dimensions. During a NDE, for instance, one may be transported through a tunnel to white light where it is common to encounter deceased people. Some type of revelation about one's life is also common. And one can have a ME during the NDE.<sup>27</sup>

NDEs are often discounted by scientists as they relate the experience to temporal lobe abnormalities such as seizures. However, research indicates that there is little correlation of temporal lobe seizures to NDE accounts.<sup>28</sup> NDEs have also been dismissed as the effect of a dying brain, yet NDEs do not necessarily occur near death.<sup>29</sup> What is clear, though, is that there is a shift from normal waking consciousness to an extrasomatic refocus of attention.<sup>30</sup>

**Consciousness and Cognition**

The influences of mystics have also found their way into a more philosophical, metaphysical arena where scientific debates about the nature of consciousness and mind are taking place. In general, consciousness translates to being aware of one's body, the environment, and self with environment.<sup>31</sup> But how consciousness occurs is under debate. For instance, in the world of today's neuroscience, consciousness is considered to be an emergent property relegated to the brain.<sup>32</sup> A transphysical-like counterpoint is that consciousness stems from ubiquitous environmental sources of information where the brain is only part of the process.<sup>33</sup>

Cognition pertains to forms of awareness and the utilization of that awareness, modulating consciousness into perception, memory, thinking, and learning.<sup>34</sup> For both scientist and mystic, "mind" is equated with cognition, albeit the nature of mind is perceived differently. The scientific, conservative camp regards it as a mental, physical activity generated by neural activity,<sup>35</sup> while the mystics have a radical view in that they regard it as a more wide-reaching effect where mind also functions outside of the brain, a multi-faceted interface with an all-pervasive consciousness, continually awakening to more information.<sup>36</sup> Psychologist Charles Tart, known for his work in states of consciousness, adds to the debate by citing a host of cognitive phenomena such as out-of-body experiences and psi that indicate that some portion of the mind transcends the ordinary physical world,<sup>37</sup> which offers support for the existence of non-local consciousness as in the instance of remote healing.

Neuroscientists and psychologists often consider cognition to be reflective or representational stemming from neural activity alone, one of the considerations that have come to be known as physicalism or materialism.<sup>38</sup> Yet Robert Ornstein, author of *The Psychology of Consciousness*, maintains that personal consciousness cannot represent the entire external world.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, a mystic's viewpoint is that cognition includes the

The schematic was based on an image of the Northern Crane Martial Arts Association dojo. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

**Extreme Contributions**

Mystics also offer wider views of reality that stand to better inform us of the basic conditions of life, and they have real-world implications. For instance, it has been mystics who have historically carried forward the investigation and understanding of transphysical or extreme phenomena that correspond with expanded states of consciousness as well as with the existence of other worlds.<sup>23</sup>

One such transphysical event is the mystical experience (ME). A central feature of ME is experiencing oneness and interconnectedness with all creation.<sup>24</sup> There is also a deepened sense of reality where the physical world is seen as limiting.<sup>25</sup> Research shows that on average ME people are well-adjusted, healthy, educated, and creative.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, a near-death experience (NDE) contains a variety of elements that relate to tapping other dimensions, a common denominator of both mystical and quantum worlds. There may be an out-of-body experience (OBE) where

ability to perceive the world in a more immediate, non-representational way, such as with the mystical experience. Still, as Tart says, the part cannot define the whole.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, neither mental activity nor the more robust transphysical awareness can perceive the entirety of existence.

### States of Mind

In daily practice, our biological self forms the foundation for what we can perceive, but our nature limits us to being able to select only a portion of all the energies impacting us.<sup>41</sup> Our psychological self, molded by such things as upbringing and education, further limits perception. The filtering effects of biology and psychology translate into our state of mind.

As Aldous Huxley points out, our filters act as a reducing valve of Mind at Large offering but a “measly trickle” of awareness.<sup>42</sup> This trickle often has substantial effects, especially when it is projected into firm belief. Just as scientists reduce mind to physical, neural activity, so too do mystics take a dogmatic stance by thinking they are dealing with an absolute reality. In both instances, the calcification of mind limits learning as they both condition their practitioners to expect certain results.

That said, according to Tart, an understanding of radical mind opens the doors to realizing that belief may affect reality, not just an interpretation of it.<sup>43</sup> This includes one’s personal state of health. Placebo-related research, for instance, reveals that one’s state of mind produces physiological effects. The formative cognitive influences of conditioning and expectation act beyond philosophical concerns to become the two main drivers of placebo responses, each influencing different biological pathways.<sup>44</sup> Due to the general increasing awareness of the placebo response, simply enrolling in a clinical trial is known to produce positive effects.<sup>45</sup>

Beyond biological effects, Tart’s view that beliefs affect reality takes on a grander vision. Whether our world is thought to be exclusively material, or also consists of the transcendent or transphysical, amounts to belief formed by conditioning and expectation. Conservative materialism has an advantage of providing a stable, universal baseline, that being the physical world. In turn, radical transphysical thought offers a significant contribution of extending the boundaries of what this might mean.



“Assent of the Blessed,”  
Hieronymus Bosch, 1450–1516.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons

It is worth noting that psychophysiological data of transphysical events such as mystical and near-death experiences contrast with a neural-production model of the brain-mind relationship as they point to conditions of mind beyond the physical.<sup>46</sup> The Newberg study on prayer also noted that physiological changes during meditation correlate with elements of ME such as intensity, oneness, and transformation. This supports William James contention that one’s state of mind is influenced by transcendental qualities.<sup>47</sup>

### A Meeting of Minds

Both scientists and mystics value increasing knowledge. Both have divisions, disciplines, and levels of development. Collective findings of each are projected into worldviews. Academic-scientific work is built on mental acuity and ideas representing the physical world, so naturally this process would model mind as being mental resulting from physical processes. Formed by education of and experience with transphysical worlds, the same process of conditioning and expectation applies to mystics and to their development of mysticisms. As a result, mind is modeled as something not limited to the physical.

As physicist Fritjof Capra indicates in his landmark work, *The Tao of Physics*, physics in general involves seeing the essence of nature, which is also the central aim of mystics.<sup>48</sup> While modern physics has had a profound influence on all aspects of society, he continues, its central ideas are similar to ancient views promulgated by mystics.<sup>49</sup>

The existence of transphysical dimensions doesn’t necessarily obviate findings relating to the physical world. They simply enhance or enlarge upon them. Conservative and radical views can co-exist and be applied according to the work at hand. In such a manner, we stand to establish new areas of scientific inquiry, as well as expand the scope and meaning of life as the depths of mystics’ knowledge and thinking continue to be revealed in modern times.

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## BACKSCATTER

Mark Boccuzzi and Julie Beischel

# The Windbridge Institute Ten Years Working at the Cutting Edge of Science

**F**ounded in early 2008 by husband-and-wife research team Mark Boccuzzi and Julie Beischel, PhD, the Windbridge Institute, LLC, has been working at the forefront of survival of consciousness and general parapsychological research. What follows is a retrospective and a brief presentation of what we have learned about life, death, and what comes next.

### Origin Story

In 2007, Julie's post-doctoral fellowship in the Psychology Department at the University of Arizona was coming to an end. Her position involved studying mediums, people who report regularly experiencing communication with the deceased, and had been funded for four-and-a-half years by a single donor who was unable to continue the support. While the publication of the paper "Anomalous Information Reception by Research Mediums Demonstrated using a Novel Triple-blind Protocol" (Beischel & Schwartz, 2007) was a major accomplishment, Julie felt that there were still many interesting and important questions about mediums and mediumship left to be answered. Despite her best efforts and the kind support of colleagues both in and outside of academia, she was unable to secure a position at an existing institution that would provide her with the autonomy and flexibility she required to pursue her research goals. This search for a new home was further complicated by the controversial nature of mediumship and the overall lack of available research funding for its study.

It was at this point that we started to really think about our future and began to wonder if it would be possible to create and sustain a new institution that primarily focused on mediumship research. We certainly had our reservations at the beginning. We knew that pursuing mediumship in a world driven by scientific materialism would quickly lead us down a treacherous path that would have profound impacts on us both personally and professionally. In addition, since we were initially creating the organization using only our personal savings, we knew that there would be no financial safety net. There were no endowments or other substantial financial support to fall back on. Despite these uncertainties, we decided to move forward and settled on a name, the Windbridge Institute.

People often ask us about the origin of the name "Windbridge." We really liked the ethereal nature of wind

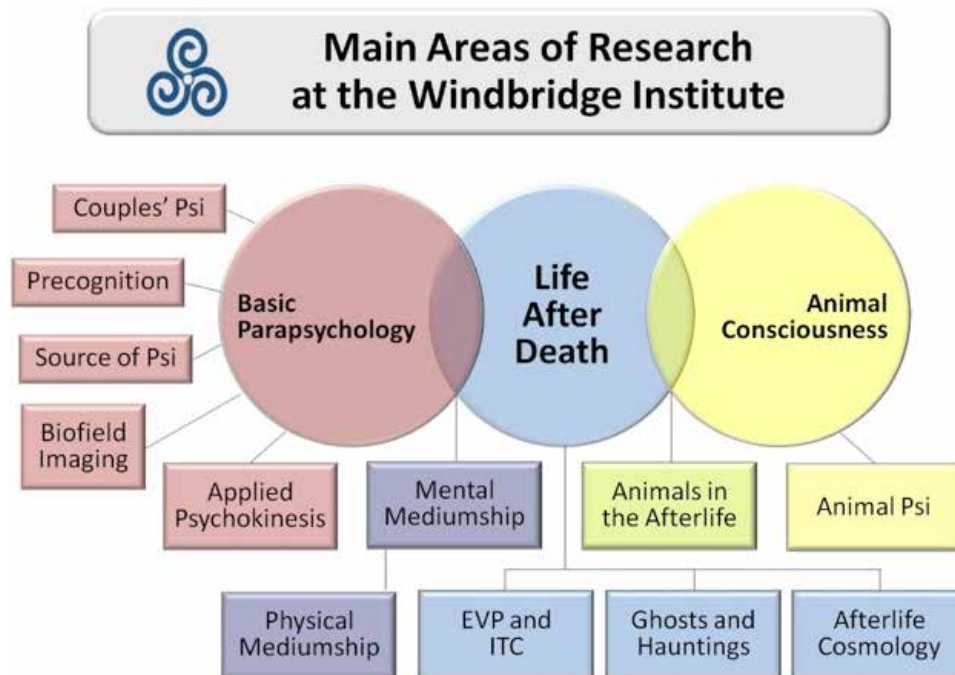
and that it's an invisible force capable of creating great change coupled with the more material idea of the bridge that connects the gaps between ignorance and knowledge and between the living and the afterlife. And so, the Windbridge Institute was born.

With the name taken care of, we turned our attention to the Institute's mission. We knew from the start that any research into an area like mediumship and any talk of life-after-death could quickly get bogged down by circular philosophical debates, religious dogma, entrenched scientism, social stigma, prejudice, death anxiety, and existential angst. So, from the very beginning, we did our best to sidestep all that by developing a research agenda that focused on addressing real-world issues around mediumship.

Despite what one might think about mediums or the idea of an afterlife, the realities are that: (1) sitters are seeking out mediums to receive messages from their loved ones every day; (2) very little empirically-based information exists about modern mediums, current mediumship practices, and the impact that receiving a mediumship reading has on sitters; (3) scientific inquiry regarding mediumship could fundamentally change our understanding of consciousness and human capabilities; and (4) if mediumship is in fact helpful for people, we need to understand how best to utilize it to help solve real-world problems. Now, we could either dismiss the entire phenomenon out-of-hand as fraud and magical thinking as so many people did before us, or we could be good scientists and try to study it using the modern tools and methods of science. We chose to be scientists. In order to encapsulate our general mission into a simple statement within our name, we adopted the tag-line "for applied research in human potential."

### First Things First

Although we knew our primary focus would be on Julie's mediumship research, Mark's research interests included other related areas, including hauntings, instrumental transcommunication (ITC), physical mediumship, afterlife cosmology, and basic parapsychology (precognition, telepathy, clairvoyance, and mind-matter interactions). We also realized that any new insights into the nature of human consciousness might also apply to non-human animals, so we added an "Animal Consciousness" program into the mix. These three areas



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became codified into what was quickly becoming our overly ambitious research agenda.

Beyond identifying what we were going to study we needed to define a set of guiding principles to help us decide how we would study them. These include:

1. Respect the phenomena, the practitioners, and the research volunteers.
2. Put aside preconceived notions. Study the phenomenon as it exists, not how we think it should exist.
3. For every proposed research project, ask “So what?” regarding the implications of possible conclusions. Ensure every project addresses an important scientific question. What would this project actually allow us to learn and is that a worthwhile pursuit?
4. Think in terms of holistic systems and don’t be overly reductionist.
5. Focus on methods and be agnostic about results.
6. Optimize research conditions while maximizing experimental controls.
7. Use experimental blinding as needed but avoid studies that employ deception or providing false or misleading information to participants as a research method.

8. “You can do it fast or you can do it right.” Complete one project at a time. Understand the results. Then move on to the next one.

9. There is much to be learned from negative results and they need to be published.

We also made a decision to not get too fenced in by older research methods and findings. While there are many important historic studies of mediumship, many of them are difficult to apply to modern American mediums. Mediumship, like science, has evolved over the past 200 years. So we learned what we could from previous research and combined it with current methods and technologies to create a more detailed set of experiments that allow us to better understand how mediumship happens today.

In developing the mediumship research agenda, we realized that in order to make any real progress, we would need to examine mediums and mediumship in a systematic way. To that end, we established three mediumship research programs:

**Information:** This program tests if mediums can report accurate and specific information about the deceased loved ones of living sitters using anomalous information reception, that is, without prior knowledge, without feedback during or after the reading, and without using deceptive or fraudulent means.

**Operation:** Here, we examine the potentially unique experiences (phenomenology), psychology, and physiology of mediums.



**Application:** The major question this program addresses is “How can we apply mediumship to address real-world problems?” This includes using mediumship as a treatment option for grief, in solving crimes, and for wisdom acquisition.

While each program has its own set of objectives, they also work in harmony to provide a comprehensive understanding of modern mediumship.

### What we have learned

We have learned much about modern mental mediumship in the US in the past decade. As our understanding of these topics is constantly evolving, these findings may change as new data become available. (Always consult a licensed healthcare provider when evaluating treatment options or making lifestyle changes.) Here’s what we’ve learned so far:

- A mediumship reading appears to involve a complex dynamic between the sitter, the medium, and the invited deceased person (e.g., Beischel, 2014). As in any form of human communication, each participant in the process can potentially impact its success, and the medium is only one of them. It is important to keep in mind the characteristics and motivations of the sitter and the deceased—in addition to the medium’s—when evaluating the success of a reading.
- Some mediums, under controlled laboratory conditions, can report accurate and specific information about deceased people using anomalous information reception (e.g., Beischel, Boccuzzi, Biuso, & Rock, 2015). However, the content of the information reported by mediums cannot be used to determine its source.
- The experience of receiving communication from the deceased is different than the experience of retrieving psychic information about the living (Beischel, Mosher, & Boccuzzi, 2017; Beischel, Rock, & Boccuzzi, 2013; Rock, Beischel, & Cott, 2009). Because no empirical evidence has been produced demonstrating that mediums are using psi with the living to acquire information about the deceased, these phenomenological findings, in tandem with the evidence for anomalous information reception by mediums under controlled conditions, make communication with the deceased the most plausible explanation for mediumship and lend support for the survival of consciousness hypothesis.
- Mediums may have unique psychological or personality characteristics when compared to non-mediums (e.g., Beischel & Boccuzzi, 2017).

These findings lead to additional research questions regarding whether mediumistic capabilities are innate or can be learned.

- Electroencephalograms (EEGs) of mediums suggests that the experience of communicating with the deceased is different than remembering or imagining (Delorme, Beischel, Michel, Boccuzzi, Radin & Mills, 2013). In addition, because the process of mediumship often involves mediums verbally conveying messages to sitters and using the facial muscles associated with speech, EEG, which is susceptible to muscle movement artifacts, may not be well-suited for studying this phenomenon. Experiments exploring the brain function of mediums using different imaging techniques are currently in the planning stages.
- A survey of mediums and non-mediums demonstrated that mediums have a much higher incidence of autoimmune diseases and a higher general disease burden than non-mediums. Examining various components in mediums’ blood as well as basic psychophysiological measures demonstrated no hematological or physiological changes when comparing a reading condition to a control condition. A link between disease prevalence and adverse childhood experiences in this population has been proposed (Beischel, 2015; Beischel, Tassone, & Boccuzzi, in press).
- Preliminary research has demonstrated that receiving a mediumship reading may have a positive healing effect on those who are suffering from grief after the death of a loved one (e.g., Beischel, Mosher, & Boccuzzi, 2014–2015). However, further research is needed to draw any strong conclusions.
- Using a fully-blinded protocol similar to that employed to test mediumship accuracy during readings for deceased people, exploratory and on-going research has demonstrated that some mediums can report accurate and specific information about deceased companion animals as well (Beischel, 2012). These findings address questions regarding the nature of consciousness in non-human animals and its survival after physical death.

### Road blocks, potholes, and dead ends

Like any organization breaking new ground, we have had our share of setbacks and false starts. Taking on too much at a time, research collaborations that didn’t work out as planned, projects that took an unexpected turn, compromises that needed

## What We Have Accomplished

Since 2008—with Julie being the only full-time researcher and on an annual average institutional budget of around \$40,000/year—the Institute and its associated researchers have:

- Been awarded more than 10 competitive research grants from numerous organizations including the Bial Foundation and the Parapsychological Association's Gilbert Roller Fund.
- Published over a dozen peer-reviewed original research papers.
- Presented at over 20 scientific conferences.
- Been invited speakers at 15 meetings, conferences, and workshops.
- Written and published five books for the general public about mediumship and psi.
- Conducted over 40 media interviews designed to get research results out to the public.
- Maintained a free, public website with full references and, where possible, downloadable copies of all our research papers and media.
- Maintained an active social media presence to help disseminate research findings to the public.
- Developed a peer-reviewed testing and screening protocol for research mediums (Beischel, 2007).
- Published a comprehensive, peer-reviewed methodology for studying modern mental mediums (Beischel, 2007).
- Created, refined, and replicated a standardized protocol for testing anomalous information reception in mediums (Beischel, Boccuzzi, Biuso, & Rock, 2015).
- Gathered a team of 20 pre-screened and trained Windbridge Certified Research Mediums who regularly volunteer to participate in research.
- Established a standardized methodology and a data collection platform for ITC research (Boccuzzi & Beischel, 2011).
- Developed a non-invasive methodology for examining non-human animal psi (Boccuzzi & Beischel, 2010).
- Became recognized as technical and methodological innovators at the forefront of psi research (Boccuzzi, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2018; Boccuzzi & Beischel, 2011).
- Developed new instruments for assessing experimenter impact (Windbridge Psi-mediated Experimenter Effects Assessment Tool, WPEEAT; Boccuzzi, 2011) and psi-related experiences (Windbridge Psi and Related Phenomena Awareness Scale, WPRPAS; Beischel, 2016).

to be made when working with journal editors and granting agencies, backlash from the research community and the public, funders that turned out to be untrustworthy... the list goes on. While none of these things were entirely unexpected, we dealt with all these challenges.

However, you can't do what we do for as long as we have been doing it and not take a step back and consider new directions. Enter Windbridge 2.0.

### Windbridge 2.0

In early 2016, it started to become clear to us that the research scope of the Institute had become too large (see page 17). With some overlap, we were largely serving two very different audiences. Those interested in applied research and application development in the areas of mindfulness, intuition, and intention, and those who experienced the loss of a loved one and/or are seeking credible information about mediums, mediumship, after death communication, and life after death.

To better serve this second population, in July 2017 we founded the Windbridge Research Center, a 501(c)(3) public charity the mission of which is to ease suffering around dying, death, and what comes next by performing rigorous scientific research and sharing the results and other customized content with practitioners, clinicians, scientists, and the general public.

While the Windbridge Institute is still conducting applied research in the areas of mindfulness, intuition, and intention ([www.WindbridgeInstitute.com](http://www.WindbridgeInstitute.com)), the mediumship and afterlife research programs have now been moved to the Windbridge Research Center ([www.Windbridge.org](http://www.Windbridge.org)). The Center's major research areas include: empirical evaluations of the effectiveness of methods aimed at reducing anxiety related to the fear of death; understanding the nature and prevalence of end-of-life experiences; empirical evaluations of treatments for grief, including mediumship; understanding the practices and abilities of practitioners; and the integration of mediumship with traditional healthcare practices. In addition, the Center publishes *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness Studies*, a free, open-access, peer-reviewed, online-only journal.

With Julie as the Center's Director of Research and Mark in the role of Executive Director, the Center will continue to perform studies and publish scientific papers describing the results of afterlife research as well as distribute free educational materials customized to meet the needs of researchers, clinicians, practitioners, and the general public.

### Acknowledgements

A project as ambitious as the Windbridge Institute wasn't created in a vacuum and there were many people who helped get us up and running in those early days and continue to support us today. We can't list you all here, but you know who you are. Thank you.

**MARK BOCCUZZI** and **JULIE BEISCHEL** are co-founders of the Windbridge Institute and the Windbridge Research Center. Mark holds a BS in computer science with a minor in broadcast communications. He is the author of *Visualizing Intention: Art Informed by Science*. Dr. Beischel received her PhD in Pharmacology and Toxicology with a minor in Microbiology and Immunology and is the author of the e-books *Among Mediums, Meaningful Messages*, and *From the Mouths of Mediums* and the paperback book *Investigating Mediums: A Windbridge Institute Collection*.



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