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Article

## Remote Mental Interactions: A Review of Theoretical Modeling of Psychophysical Anomalies Part 3

Iona Miller\*

### ABSTRACT

This article presents a review of theoretical modeling of psychophysical anomalies. It originates from my involvement with the *Journal of Non-Locality and Remote Mental Interactions* (JNLRFMI) which was founded by Lian Sidorov in the wake of research institutions of previous decades, such as SRI, IONS, PEARS, and MRU. JNLRFMI began as an attempt to bridge widely scattered evidence and ideas on the frontline of mind-matter research (energetics, remote mind-mind and mind-matter interactions). JNLRFMI was a challenging and exhilarating journey, sustained by multidisciplinary readership interest in the subject.

Part 3 of this article contains a round-table discussion on memory, information and the limits of identity entitled “Who and where is the Self?” moderated by *JNLRFMI* Editor, Lian Sidorov, and participated by Roger Nelson, Stanley Krippner, Jim Tucker, Mark Germaine, Chris King, Matti Pitkanen and Gerry Zeitlin. Such discussions help researchers re-contextualize what has come before, determine where we “are” in deciphering the minscape, and where we are going by suggesting pertinent open-ended questions.

**Key Words:** psi, parapsychology, biophysics, energetics, Schumann Resonance, mind-body, geomagnetism, ELF, ESP, precognition, hypnosis, parapsysics, remote viewing, worldview.

### Who and where is the Self?

#### A round-table discussion on memory, information and the limits of identity

Lian Sidorov, Moderator

*The hard problem of consciousness is no petty adversary but the abyss staring us back in the face. The universal record is an undecidable proposition which intent turns into an acute paradox.* --Chris King

### Introduction

In 1964 Dr. Ian Stevenson, chief psychiatrist at the hospital of the University of Virginia, took a step that many regarded as professionally suicidal: he abandoned his practice in order to focus

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his full attention on the investigation of alleged cases of reincarnation. His decision, in Stevenson's own words, was prompted by his increasing frustration with the current psychiatric dogma, which attributes human personality development to a combination of genetics and pre-/post-natal environmental factors. As he saw it, some of the psychiatric disorders confronting him in his practice simply could not make sense within that framework. With a rare combination of visionary zeal and highly-trained investigative skepticism, he went on to document, analyze and archive over 2,000 cases over the next 4 decades (Stevenson, 1975-1983; Stevenson, 1993; Cranston and Williams, 1984; Becker, 1993; Secrest, 1988). In 1977, the prestigious *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases* devoted a special issue to his studies. Since then, he has published numerous scientific papers as well as a series of books in which he makes the case for this extraordinary body of evidence in a refreshingly dry, critical and understated tone that has earned him universal professional accolades as well as academic followers - such as Dr. Jim Tucker, assistant professor of psychiatry also at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Their studies focus on young children (primarily for credibility reasons, but also because these memories tend to fade around the age of seven, as the child enters the turbulence of the outside world and starts forming abundant new impressions once in the school environment) and rely on a thorough investigation of subject statements, witnessed behavior, medical and legal documents, verification of names, dates and factual information that the child could not have been exposed to by other means. Particularly strong evidence comes from skills (typically xenoglossia, or the use of unlearned dialects, old or foreign languages); behaviors (phobias, phobias); and biological traits (rare birthmarks corresponding to documented cause of death or maiming in the claimed "previous personality"). This pioneering work continues to evolve as innovative investigative methods and theoretical approaches are developed by a new generation of researchers (see Keil J. and Tucker JB, 2000; Tucker JB, 2000; Tucker JB and Keil J, 2001).

Technically coincidental with Stevenson's decision to delve full-time into the study of alleged reincarnation cases, in 1964 Dr. Stanley Krippner joined the staff of the newly-funded Dream Laboratory at the Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn. There, in collaboration with Montague Ullman and a small team including Sol Feldstein, Robert Van de Castle and other occasional collaborators, he went on to develop what has become a landmark in experimental parapsychology: a series of studies in dream telepathy, which made use of rank-ordering techniques by independent judges in order to assess whether a sleeping subject could successfully perceive imagery transmitted by a sender.

In the prototypical experiment (see Ullman and Krippner, 1973) the subject slept in an isolated room, while his EEG tracings were monitored by the experimenter in a nearby room. The agent, whose location varied from 98 feet away to a separate building in later experiments, would randomly choose an envelope containing one of a pre-selected group of art-prints, then - once informed by the experimenter that the subject had entered REM sleep - would focus his/her full attention on trying to transmit that image to the subject. After each REM period, the subject would be awakened and allowed to tape-record his dream impressions, then was allowed to go back to sleep. The same target and agent were to be used for the entire night. Once the night's dreams were transcribed, the transcripts were sent with the entire pool of 12 art-prints to a panel of three independent judges, who would rank the dream reports for correspondence against all 12 prints, with number 1 for the best match, down to number 12 for the least degree of correspondence. A similar rank-order matching was performed by the subjects themselves.

Over the course of several years, this protocol was varied to incorporate precognitive function tests, comparisons between the effect of multiple versus single agents and between multiple/single targets for a given night, while other experiments studied the impact of target-enhancing, multi-sensory agent "immersion" (such as a combination of visual, auditory and tactile stimuli) on the success of telepathic transmission. Out of ten formal studies described in "Dream Telepathy", seven yielded statistically significant results.

This type of rank-order judging has also been used in the context of another well-studied paranormal function: remote viewing, defined as "the acquisition and description, by mental means, of information blocked from ordinary perception by distance, shielding or time", has been the subject of the most extensive government-sponsored psi research program to date (see 1; 2; Targ and Kutra, 1998; Radin, 1997; McMoneagle, 1997, 2000, 2002).

Over 24 years, various intelligence-gathering agencies such as the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Army, the Navy and NASA have contributed about 20 million dollars in funding to test the limits of human remote perception and collect information for their various operations. Typical examples included the nature of foreign military installations, the location and condition of kidnap victims, the description of nuclear facilities or nuclear events, surface and atmospheric characteristics of yet-unvisited planets, etc.

The essential feature of all RV protocols is that the viewer and anyone else who may be present during the session is completely blind to the nature of the target - which is typically designated by a nonsensical string of random alpha-numeric characters called the coordinate; under these conditions, trained viewers produced results in which the overall odds against chance were  $10^{20}$  to one (Radin 1997, pp. 101). Even though "blueprint accuracy" is a relatively rare event even for the top viewers in the world, the results were judged sufficiently valuable to ensure continued funding from these various agencies over more than two decades (see above references for a full history, or Sidorov 2003 for a discussion of main RV characteristics).

After 1995, when the CIA decided to discontinue this program following a Congressional investigation, remote viewing became part of the public domain; while some of the viewers went on to establish formal teaching programs (with varying degrees of respect for the original methodology and protocol rigors), a small number of motivated researchers have continued to develop innovative experimental approaches meant to shed light on the physical mechanisms that are at work behind this phenomenon (see May & al. 1994; McMoneagle 1997, 2000, 2002; Swann 1996; 4)

One of the most remarkable observations made by telepathy and remote viewing researchers, starting with Rene Warcollier at the beginning of last century, is that study participants sometimes seemed to involuntarily tap into each other's subconscious, retrieving data which had nothing to do with the intended target (Warcollier 2001; Warcollier 1927, 1928; Targ & Kutra 1998; Swann 1996). For example, in "La telepathie experimentale" (*Revue Metapsychique*, 1926-1927), Warcollier discusses his series of studies with batteries of senders and recipients, noting that "the most extraordinary observation we have made [under our experimental

conditions] is that the percipients have very frequently shared identical spontaneous images (perceived visually or intuitively) whose origin remained unknown."

But such group interference effects are not restricted to anomalous cognition: since 1998 the Princeton-based Global Consciousness Project, headed by Dr. Roger Nelson, has been involved in what is probably the largest, most coordinated and innovative PK study ever conducted: using a synchronized array of over 50 RNGs (random number generators) hosted by labs all over the surface of the globe, the project members have looked for statistical deviations in the generated data stream which can be linked with events of global significance - such as the funeral ceremonies of Princess Diana, New Year's Eve celebrations, World Cup Soccer, or the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Nelson & al., 2002). While not every one of the 98 predictions made as of January 2002 behaved as expected, the composite probability for the whole array of events was  $8.3 \times 10^{-8}$  - a strikingly robust demonstration that the RNG network reacts to major collective experiences (Nelson, 2002).

But what do all these apparently distinct phenomena have in common, beyond the stigma of "subjective states" or "paranormal function" imposed on them by the scientific orthodoxy? Although not evident at first glance, there is a remarkable common feature that emerges from their study, and it is simply this: that in questioning their underlying mechanism, one is forced, sooner or later, to recognize the fluid nature of individual boundaries. If one's personality can be dramatically affected by "memories" which could not have possibly originated in the present life; if a trained person can successfully remote view complex physical targets, the emotions of people present at the site, and past or future events including their cognitive context; if our dream experiences can reflect the contents of another human being's simultaneous circumstances or deliberate intent; and if our minds can collectively create such a powerful constructive interference that distant RNGs are capable of detecting it - then how do we decide where one mind ends and another begins?

Is it reasonable to believe that telepathy, remote viewing, pre-cognition, reincarnation memories and similar experiences are based on one consciousness mode (non-local in space and time) while our common, waking mind is the emergent product of brain activity? And if we choose to believe that all consciousness is non-local - that it can survive separation from bodily functions - then what can we conclude about the substrate of our individual memories and the limits of the self? What is the role of the brain, beyond a local motor control unit? Clinical amnesia cases suggest that memories can be intactly stored, but non-retrievable. Could the same be one day extended to a vast range of mental experiences - such as dream material and past life events? If what we are is dictated by our memories, then how do we draw the line between experiences acquired via "normal", sensory means, and those we access mentally, such as reincarnation-type data or the rare but powerful remote viewing bi-location event?

Of course, this is merely a rhetorical question: just as we can temporarily immerse in a book or film to the point of identifying with the character, we can emerge from the typical remote viewing experience unscathed, with as strong a sense of identity as ever. The same goes for the majority of Stevenson's cases, where the child spontaneously and gradually stops talking about his "other life" around the age of six, as he/she begins to interact intensely with the outside world and its demands - to the point that these memories fade into oblivion. But the observation needs

to be made that in both cases it is one and the same mechanism which restores one's sense of identity - and that mechanism is focus. It is complete focus on a target which allows the remote viewer to retrieve correct information about it, with nothing but a string of numbers and letters as a coordinate and the joint intent of the tasker to assign that particular coordinate to the given target; it is the collective focus of the sender and percipients which allows group telepathy to work; and it is a powerful emotional experience (which creates its own focal attraction) that presumably results in mind-matter interactions such as the GCP's sharp statistical deviations, or the birth defects described by Stevenson.

There is also, from a theoretical point of view, the question of how exactly information is encoded, or imprinted, into the fabric of reality. Regardless of what we choose to call the collection of memories produced by Stevenson's children, there is no question that, in the cases validated by him and others, there is at least proof of anomalous cognition involved. Yet, as he and others have repeatedly argued (see Becker, 1993), this is no typical psychic ability: these children have not given any indication that they are able to produce extrasensory information about subjects other than the personality they claim to be, or show any other aptitude for psychic functioning.

From a remote viewer's perspective, there is a highly significant phenomenological discrepancy between the fragmentary, subtle mental impressions that form the typical RV data and the coherent, controlled retrieval of information that these individuals are capable of - spontaneously or under questioning. A similar chasm separates the experience of conscious or dream telepathy from that demonstrated by Stevenson's cases. If both sets of information (those involved in remote perception and those verified as "reincarnation evidence") require a non-physical substrate as an intermediary storage medium, why are the latter so much more cohesive?

Finally, Stevenson's case for biological "imprinting" of information on the fetus forces us to re-examine the problem of mind-matter interactions in light of their highly charged emotional content. As Stevenson has noted, about 35% of children who allege to remember previous lives present with atypical birthmarks or birth defects which are claimed to correspond to bodily wounds in the previous personality. From the 210 such cases he has investigated, 43 out of the 49 cases in which a post-mortem report was obtained showed a high concordance between wounds and birth defects - typically within a 10 square centimeter radius of the same anatomical location, but often much closer or present at multiple locations, as in the case of bullet entry and exit points (Stevenson, 1993).

The parapsychology literature is also unanimous in recognizing the importance of emotionally-charged targets in functions like presentiment/precognition (with negative emotions showing by far more prominence to the percipient's mind). Does powerful emotion bind together cognitive representations and automatic reactions (including a possibly archaic psi function) in the same way as the emotional memory shortcut loop studied by neurophysiologists (Chin 1996)? Is this the basis of karmic doctrine, of belief in the persistence of psychic complexes which are fated to seek new physical experiences until gradually dissolved by enlightenment?

Regardless of how we choose to interpret Stevenson's data, his evidence should give fresh impetus to the study of anomalous cognition. While most of the parapsychology literature has

tended to focus on subject parameters (psychological profile, brain states, etc) it is our belief that the careful investigation of target characteristics (the type of information that best manifests in psi function, and how this information packet is organized) has just as much to teach us about remote perception. It is our hope that this joint discussion may bring to light some novel perspectives and research possibilities - as well as a deeper understanding of the functional organization of Global Consciousness.

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## PARTICIPANTS

RN: Roger Nelson

SK: Stanley Krippner

JT: Jim Tucker

MG: Mark Germinie

CK: Chris King

MP: Matti Pitkanen

GZ: Gerry Zeitlin

Moderator: Lian Sidorov

- **Roger Nelson** is the director of the Global Consciousness Project. Until his retirement in 2002, he served as the coordinator of experimental work in the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR <http://www.princeton.edu/~pear/index.html>) lab, directed by Robert Jahn in the department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, School of Engineering/Applied Science, Princeton University.
- **Stanley Krippner** is professor of psychology at Saybrook Graduate School, San Francisco and a former director of the Kent State University Child Study Center, Kent OH, and of the Maimonides Medical Center Dream Research Laboratory, Brooklyn NY. He is a member of the editorial board for the Journal of Indian Psychology and Revista Argentina de Psicología Paranormal, and the advisory board for International School for Psychotherapy, Counseling, and Group Leadership (St. Petersburg) and the Czech Unitaria (Prague). He holds faculty appointments at the Universidade Holística Internacional (Brasilia) and the Instituto de Medicina y Tecnología Avanzada de la Conducta (Ciudad Juárez).
- **Jim Tucker** is Assistant Professor in the Division of Personality Studies, Department of Psychiatric Medicine of the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA). His research on cases suggestive of reincarnation has been published in Psychological Reports, The Journal of Scientific Exploration and The Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality.
- **Chris King** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Mathematics, University of Auckland, NZ. Publications of interest include: King C.C. 2003 "Chaos, Quantum-transactions and Consciousness: A Biophysical Model of the Intentional Mind",

NeuroQuantology 1, 129-148. King C. C. 2003 “Biocosmology”, WED Open Peer Reviewed Monographs 2 1-42.

- **Mark Germaine** is a clinical psychiatrist with a post-doctoral clinical neuroscience research fellowship in 1990-1992 at Yale University School of Medicine. He is associate editor of the journal *Dynamical Psychology* and a recipient of the American Psychological Foundation F. J. McGuigan Award for contributions to the understanding of the human mind.
- **Matti Pitkanen** is on the editorial board of *JNLRFMI* and a former professor in the Department of Physical Sciences, High Energy Physics Division at the University of Helsinki, Finland.
- **Gerry Zeitlin** is a graduate of Cornell University (B.E.E. 1960) and the University of Colorado (M.S.E.E. 1969). His work in physics and astronomy is outlined online. He currently runs the Open SETI Initiative.

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### **Dr. Roger Nelson:**

**1.** Could you share with our readers the origins of the Global Consciousness Project? How was the idea initially received by the parapsychology community - was the scientific world ready for it?

RN: Origins go back to philosophical considerations, for example, being impressed by the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin, presented in *The Phenomenon of Man* and *The Future of Man*. In the early '90's it became possible to do field work with REGs in group situations, and this led to some prototype, ad hoc experiments with multiple REGs at separated locations: the OJ Simpson trial, the Gaiamind Meditation, the funeral ceremonies for Princess Diana and Mother Teresa. This work developed into the idea of a permanent network of continuously recorded REGs placed around the world in late 1997, and after some months of preparation, the GCP (EGG) network was in place by August 1998.

Most people in parapsychology were interested, and positive but careful; several became participant contributors. The consensus, I think, was that this was a good idea even if far out, but that it had to be done with scientific rigor.

**2.** What is the rough number and distribution of the GCP random number generators?

RN: There are, as of October 2003, about 60 active eggs in the network. They are distributed as broadly as we can arrange with volunteer hosts, and we have sites from Alaska to Fiji, in both hemispheres, all continents but Antarctica, and in most time zones.

**3.** What is the most sparsely populated area in which you have located a RNG? Have you noticed any correlations between a region's population density or its degree of media exposure and the magnitude/temporal onset of the statistical deviation?

RN: I don't know what is the most sparsely populated area -- maybe Alaska? I have not seen evidence of correlations with population density, and we have not looked at questions like the local media exposure on individual eggs, except informally. In the coming year we will develop greater facility to examine questions like that, but they require subsidiary information and measures that have to be developed. We do not assume that the eggs are affected primarily by the local environment, though that remains a research question. The evidence points to nonlocal effects, and toward "relevance" as the more potent manifestation of "distance".

**4.** Is there any evidence for a "wave of deviations" reflecting spatio-temporally dependent events such as local New Year celebrations? In other words, are local RNGs more likely to be influenced by geographically proximal human reactions (i.e. analyses for 1999 Indian elections, Wien University exams)?

RN: See the previous question. As for New Years, we do signal averaging that simply combines all time zones to yield a result representing, in effect, a single, synchronous celebration. In this case, the data from eggs all over the world are used for each sequential midnight. The strong result is one piece of evidence favoring the notion that the anomalous structuring effect is nonlocal. Yet we have seen some evidence of stronger deviations in geographically local eggs, specifically, in the data from September 11 2001 (but note the relevance conundrum.) We can in principle do an analysis that would test whether the New Year's effect is larger on relatively local eggs. This is one of the areas we will focus on in the next year of comprehensive analytical work.

**5.** Is there any indication, from your preliminary analysis, that some kind of amplification also occurs at a cognitive level? In other words, have you tried to look for RNG effects in isolated locations or populations without access to current news? Have you any indication that such populations might have been cognitively affected by a global tidal wave of psychological upheaval - the source of which nevertheless remained hidden to these individuals?

RN: While we have not looked for effects on isolated locations as you suggest, there is good evidence in the data that much or most of what happens in the "global consciousness" is unconscious. For example, the huge deviations on September 11th 2001 began some hours before the overt events. I think, by implication, there may indeed be subtle effects of major global upheavals on people who don't know about the primary source.

**6.** This might be a stretch - but based on Cleve Backster's well-known work with plant "primary perception" (Stone 1994, 1995; Jensen 1997) there is reason to hypothesize that large plant populations might also be capable of an effect on RNGs when exposed to a powerful threat. Have you ever considered placing a number of RNGs in the vicinity of, say, a forest area scheduled for controlled burning? It would probably be important, in such a study, to separate any major human reaction from that of the organisms involved - therefore a controlled fire would be better suited than a wild one, which can evoke large-scale reactions of fear and loss

among humans. Along the same line, it might be interesting to test a field RNG's reaction to half of an animal population when the other one is removed and distantly sacrificed - as might happen on laboratory subjects or farm animals diagnosed with a contagious disease. According to a series of preliminary studies published in the July issue of JNL (see Agadjanian, 2003) such split animal populations appear capable of communicating their experience at least to the point of stimulating an increased replication rate in the unexposed group. It might therefore be interesting to note any possible RNG effects from such remote "primary perceptions"... How do you feel about expanding the GCP paradigm beyond the scope of human consciousness?

**RN:** The experiments you propose are interesting but out of the line of development of the GCP. Someone else could use our technology, but we don't plan to go there. Our mission is to develop and manage a monitor for the globe that might give us insight into subtle manifestations of events that are important to humans. This is a big enough task to preclude excursions into other areas that themselves would require serious and ongoing investment to do properly. As for expanding beyond the scope of human consciousness, it is apparent to me that we have lots to learn before concluding that what we see in the data is in fact due exclusively to humans. My guess is there are other sources than the nominal. In one direction, we have to consider the experimenters; in the other we have to consider the whole universe, animals, trees, and the earth herself.

**7.** The September 11, 2001 event was one of the most shocking, reverberating tragedies in recent memory - and presumably the one with the greatest cultural resonance since the start of the GCP experiment. Your results demonstrate not only a significant deviation from typical RNG behavior, but, surprisingly, that this pattern began several hours prior to the onset of the events (Nelson, 2002; Radin, 2002) Have you noted this type of "pre-sentient" RNG behavior in any other circumstances - and if so, can you make any observations about the type of event that tends to trigger it - are major catastrophic occurrences more likely to manifest this pattern than positive events? What about unscheduled (i.e. earthquakes, deaths) versus scheduled (large group meditations, New Year Celebrations) events? Does the magnitude (presumably demonstrating the size of the impact on our collective subconscious) correlate with the onset of the deviation?

**RN:** Good questions, and ones that we do have some preliminary experience with. There is a little evidence that surprise catastrophic events like earthquakes may register a little ahead of the nominal time. I have not seen any similar suggestive evidence in the scheduled events, but the question has not been well-defined. Except for September 11, we have not done thorough assessments, and conclusions are not yet warranted. This topic will be one of several specific areas we will be addressing in the intense analysis program planned for the next year.

**8.** It is also very interesting to note, in this context, that the data obtained on Monday, September 10, 2001 by a group of trained remote viewers (the Hawaii Remote Viewing Guild) meeting for their weekly class was remarkably congruent with the events that were to take place approximately 7 hours later (see "Migrations into the near future" by Sita Seery in this issue). How do you try to interpret such "intrusions" of future events into our consciousness?

**RN:** I don't try to interpret these descriptions. I find them interesting, but I would have to be much better educated about the material, the sources and context, before I would feel comfortable attempting any interpretation.

**Dr. Stanley Krippner:**

**9.** Dr. Krippner, in your book *Dream Telepathy* you conclude that "an important ingredient in the success of experiments [...] is the use of potent, vivid, emotionally impressive human interest pictures to which both agent and subject can relate". You have also made the observation that certain basic themes (for example eating, drinking, or religious themes) tend to come through more predictably. Have you been able to further differentiate between various classes of targets - i.e. are archetypal images, or culturally prominent symbols, more readily transmitted?

**SK:** No. These are great ideas; we did not have the financial resources to do this, but perhaps someone will in the future.

**10.** Have you noticed any "contaminating" elements (information originating from one participant's personal experience or circumstances, rather than the expected association basin of the designated target) that seem to inadvertently manifest in other participants' dreams?

**SK:** Yes. We have discussed this "contamination" in our book and articles. It happened early in our studies, but did not happen once we took steps to keep the "sender" from reading extraneous material, etc.

**11.** In 1971, you attempted an experiment in which the telepathic image was to be transmitted by approximately 2,000 agents simultaneously. The target slide was "The seven spinal chakras" by Scralian and was projected on a wall, before a concert audience, with the words "Try using your ESP to 'send' this picture to Malcolm Bessent. He will try to dream about the picture. Try to 'send it to him. Malcolm Bessent is now at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory in Brooklyn". A number of clear correspondences (mean score of 83 out of 100) appeared in Bessent's dream that night, whereas the control subject, whose name and location was not disclosed to the audience, showed a high correspondence score (96 out of 100) for this image two nights later. Overall, however, there was no significant improvement in dream correspondence scores with 2,000 agents as opposed to the typical single one.

How do you interpret these findings in light of the purported field effect observed by the Global Consciousness Project? Do you feel there might be a difference between emotional and symbolic cognitive interactions at the global level - that perhaps a resonant effect, or constructive interference, is only possible for the former? Does your body of research support such a hypothesis - have you noted a difference between the group communication patterns of abstract versus emotional content?

**SK:** Here you are asking questions on the basis of one study, a study that did not yield overall positive results. So to make a conjecture would not be possible.

**12.** Another one of your experiments (the "Vaughan Study") showed that using the same target over several nights decreased, rather than increased, the overall correspondence scores. In other words, the amount of time an agent spent "transmitting" the target image did not result in improved performance. In your book, you assign this observation to the gradual loss of interest on the part of the agent, who found herself increasingly bored with the single target.

This is a particularly interesting finding in light of RV performance because it suggests that the amount of time spent "probing" a target aspect may be less important than the intensity of the focus with which it is probed (assuming that telepathy and remote viewing share a similar mechanism, as suggested by Ingo Swann). Somehow, for both sender (target) and percipient, remote sensing appears to require a critical threshold of intent, which typically seems to undergo a rapid decay rate once generated - hence the need for persistent re-focusing, re-probing and re-cueing...

Have you found that particular agent focusing techniques tended to enhance the probability of successful telepathy? For example, you have noted that a "sensory bombardment" with visual, auditory and tactile stimuli meant to reinforce a particular idea for the agent (such as "Birds" or "Painter") appeared to evoke significant dream correspondences in the subjects. How does that compare with situations in which the agent is simply asked to think of multiple associations for his target - and do these sensory associations tend to appear in the subject's dream more vividly or consistently when there is a real multi-sensory immersion on the part of the agent? To translate this into RV analysis language, do you feel it might be possible to differentiate between valid remote perception and cognitive contamination among multiple viewers on the basis of how complex and multi-faceted a piece of data appears across their reports - or do associated, recalled mental images easily morph into various sensory aspects in your experience?

**SK:** The pilot study you mention was such a minor attempt that no conclusions can be drawn from it. Your suggestion to compare abstract vs. emotional content is a good one, and if someone would like to do it, I would be delighted. The Maimonides dream transcripts were destroyed (without my permission) and so we can not do it retrospectively. And your other questions can not be answered because there are not enough data available from the work that we did.

I must say that these questions are extremely perceptive. If the dream transcripts had not been destroyed, it would be possible to go back and make a retrospective analysis. All that I have is the record of judgments that were done and the dates on which the experiments took place. This enabled Michael Persinger and me to look for geomagnetic correlates with the studies as a whole and with the subject who spent the most nights in our laboratory. In both analyses we found such correlates at statistically significant levels (and published the results).

### **Dr. Jim Tucker**

**13.** Dr. Tucker, you have directly investigated a number of cases suggestive of reincarnation. How many points of validated evidence do you typically require to consider a case solved, and what type of evidence do you feel is most persuasive?

**JT:** While we have criteria for when to register a case, the determination that a case is solved is more subjective. Occasionally, a child's statements need to be compared to the specifics of the life of more than one deceased individual to see which one is a better match. A case being solved does not mean that we are convinced that it is a case of reincarnation but rather that the child's reported statements appear to correspond to one particular individual.

As for which evidence is most persuasive, that can certainly vary from case to case, but the rare cases that include written documentation of the child's statements made before the case was solved I find hard to dismiss, particularly the ones that include very specific details about the previous personality.

**14.** How is your research approach today different from the methods pioneered by Dr. Stevenson? Which aspects of this phenomenon intrigue you most? What about the theoretical approach - are there any comparative studies attempting to place such cases within a broader class of phenomena? How do you see the future evolution of your field?

**JT:** The basic approach to investigating the cases is the same-trying to document as accurately as possible what each child said, whether he or she had access to the information through normal means, the details of the previous personality's life, etc. Beyond that, as we are getting more and more of this data in our computer database, we are now able to look more at features of the cases as a group, so we may be able to get insights that we cannot get from simply looking at individual cases. Nonetheless, the careful study of strong individual cases remains the backbone of the work.

One area that intrigues me is that of cases in the West. We have gotten a number of reports of cases from parents with no previous belief in reincarnation or with a previous disdain for the idea, and while the American cases are weaker than the best of the Asian ones, this may be because we haven't collected enough yet to find the really strong ones. If we could find cases here that were as strong as the best Asian ones, then I think they would have to make an impact on people's thinking regarding reincarnation.

For now, the predominant question in the work is whether the cases are evidence of reincarnation or at least of the ability of young children to have memories of previous lives, and until we are able to answer that question with reasonable confidence, we will have difficulty moving the field to other areas. People have asked from time to time, "Why collect more cases?" but until we've collected enough so that we can say with confidence, "Some young children have memories of previous lives" or "Young children are not capable of remembering previous lives," then moving on to other issues is difficult.

**15.** In a recent JSE paper (Stevenson and Haraldsson, 2003), the authors compare certain features of reincarnation type cases as documented about one generation apart by two different investigators. Remarkable in both series is the mean age when the child first began speaking about his previous life (31 months for IS; 32 months for EH); the mention of the previous personality's name (in 88%, respectively 63% of the children); the percentage of cases in which the child mentioned the mode of death (82% for IS; 83% for EH); the proportion of violent

deaths among these (73% for IS and 80% for EH); and the prevalence of unusual behaviors such as phobias related to the previous life (typically mode of death), which occurred in 77% of IS's cases and 42% of EH's cases.

How do these memories typically present, how many specific details tend to be spontaneously described at one time?

**JT:** The memories present in different ways. Often, the children are very young when they begin making a statement here or there, and the statements gradually form a cohesive story. At times, families have difficulty being certain that a particular statement relates to the previous life that the child has described, and the children often resist questioning. In other situations, however, the children come out with the bulk of the story in one sitting and remain very consistent during any questioning about it.

**16.** How consistently are the children able to retrieve specific information when prompted to do so? Is there any qualitative difference you have observed between the way they describe current life memories and those of the alleged past personality - such as richness of sensory detail, the speed of information retrieval, logical associations between memories, temporal coherence of the perspective on a given episode, etc? (This would be particularly interesting to compare with the usual mode of information retrieval in remote viewing, where the data most typically manifests as fragmented sensory or conceptual material; and "normal" episodic memories, where one's mental film remains more or less a replay of the events as perceived at the time.)

**JT:** Many of the children are not able or at least not willing to answer questions about their memories. They seem to have to be in the right frame of mind to express them, and this is often during relaxed times. Certainly, exceptions exist, and some of the children talk about the past lives on a nearly constant basis. Parents often report that the children are very serious when they discuss their memories--that their manner is very different from when they are fantasizing. The memories often seem rather fragmentary, though some of the fragments, of course, are much bigger than others are. I cannot give a good answer to the question of differences between their descriptions of current life memories and the past life ones except to say that many show an intense emotional attachment to the past life ones. That emotion may be quite intermittent, but the children may cry intensely as they describe missing previous parents or other family members.

**17.** Recent brain imaging studies into multiple personality syndrome (MPS) have shown that the patterns of hippocampus activation (which are associated with the laying down and retrieval of personal memories) vary markedly between the different personalities. For example, Condie and Tsai found that when a dominant personality was replaced by a weaker alter, hippocampal activity died down only to light up again when the dominant personality returned - as if they both had access to different memory basins. These changes, however, were not observed when simply "play-acting" a personality shift. It is also interesting to note that the consensus explanation for MPS involves a defense mechanism against emotional trauma, which scars or severs natural memory pathways (Carter, 2003).

Has there been any attempt so far to use this type of imaging in order to study children in the act of recollecting past life memories? Especially in cases where there is a strong behavioral or skill-type effect, one might hypothesize that the past-life, adult memories of the previous personality might overwhelm the set of memories formed by the child in this life. Were hippocampal activation patterns to differ in this fashion, we would have not only a further indication that these personality-centered memories are far more complex than mere imagination, but also a proof that they affect the very physical foundation of the brain - which would not be surprising, given Dr. Stevenson's remarkable findings with respect to the high correlations between atypical birthmarks/birth defects and the validated mode of death in the previous personality (Stevenson, 1993). Indeed, the brain and its activity during fetal development may be an important link in understanding the impact of these psychic information clusters on the child's somatic evolution.

**JT:** No functional imaging studies have been done with these children. Logistical difficulties would have to be overcome—such as having equipment and cases available in the same location, having the children recall the memories on demand, etc -- but beyond that, we would not know at this point what to look for. Recent studies in neuropsychology have looked at functional imaging differences when general subjects recall accurate memories vs. false ones, but at this point, tests are not available to assess a particular memory in a particular subject.

I would not expect the patterns in these subjects to be the same as the ones with multiple personality disorder (or dissociative identity disorder, as it is now known). Many of the children talk about the past life in the past tense; they do not appear to dissociate and “become” the previous personality.

**18.** What is the typical age and experience these children seem to recall? Do most of these alleged past life memories center around a particular age or event, or can the children easily move along their previous life time-line and produce information on demand? Have you been able to identify any general patterns - are children most likely to dwell on their routine environment and habits, or on particularly traumatic events, including death, in their previous incarnation? Are there particular types of memories, particular sensory modalities (such as visual, auditory, olfactory, texture) reported more frequently than others? Any particular trends in "archetypal experiences" - ie., are children more likely to evoke the life of a soldier?, mother? or leader? And has it been your general experience that these individuals are not aware of events which occurred between their purported death and their new life?

**JT:** The children tend to talk about people and events from the end of the previous life, and 75% of them state the mode of death for the previous personality. Along with that traumatic memory are more mundane ones, as the children recall various everyday details of the previous life. Most of the children do not seem able to easily move along their previous life time-line, and many of those who recall lives as adults appear unable to access early life events at all.

The memories do not appear to involve any particular sensory modalities, but that can be difficult to judge from the children's statements. The children do not report “archetypal experiences” but rather the details of routine lives.

While most of the children do not say anything about events between lives, a few describe intermission memories. These can involve either memories of events on Earth that occurred after the death, usually near either the home or the place of death of the previous personality and occasionally at least partially verifiable, or ones of another realm with spiritual beings.

**19.** Have you seen cases in which the child confused events in the lives of past relatives or friends with his own experiences (as the previous personality) - perhaps trying to fit all these memories into a meaningful pattern, as we do in dreams?

**JT:** By all appearances, the children report memories from the vantage point of only one deceased individual. One possible exception is Stevenson's case in *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation of Imad Elawar*, who vividly described a fatal accident in which the uncle of the man eventually identified as the previous personality died, but that is a very complex case. Otherwise, the details given by the children match the life of the identified previous personalities and not their relatives. The parents sometimes try to fit the various statements of the children into a meaningful pattern (as in the case of Imad Elawar when the parents were judged to have inferred details about the previous life that were not accurate), but when the previous personality is identified, the statements that are correct are correct for that one individual. Some statements are incorrect, of course, just as some of our memories of our own childhoods are incorrect.

**20.** The question I am working toward is whether such memory complexes might in fact linger in our collective subconscious and be "adopted" by a young child on the basis of some yet-unknown predisposing factors. Both Warcollier and Krippner (Warcollier 2001; Ullman and Krippner, 1973), to mention only two major investigators, have noted that a certain latency between information transmission and reception is rather common in telepathy - ranging from minutes to days or even longer; is it conceivable that such information becomes part of our collective, trans-temporal record and that anyone might be able to tap into it? Is there any persuasive argument you can invoke for interpreting this validation data (otherwise a spectacular body of evidence for nonlocal, trans-temporal information access) as proof for reincarnation, rather than a single-target, recurrent type of anomalous perception? How would you ultimately differentiate between "reincarnation" and remote "tapping" into the collective unconscious?

**JT:** Well, depending on how you define "single-target, recurrent type of anomalous perception," you might end up with what amounts to being another term for reincarnation, but many of these cases clearly involve more than just information transmission. The birthmarks, emotions, and behaviors that accompany the memories all suggest an individual consciousness that has continued from a previous life rather than adopted memory complexes that have somehow attached to a young child. A child who cries every day for his previous parents certainly appears to be an individual who is missing his parents from a previous life rather than a child who has unknowingly tapped into the collective unconscious. Likewise, the fact that the memories cluster around items that would have been on the mind of the previous personality at the time of death suggests that the consciousness has somehow continued from the end of that life, as opposed to a super-psi explanation that might be expected to include more varied memories.

Two other arguments against the idea of nonlocal information access: as in the case of crying children, it runs directly opposite to the subjective experiences of the subjects, who believe that

they are remembering events that they previously experienced in a prior life, and in addition, almost all of these children show no other paranormal abilities that would predispose them to being able to access such information.

## Joint questions

**21.** A recent series of independent studies has shown that one's focus, or global brain configuration, has an unexpected effect on the firing patterns of sensory processing neurons, starting as early as the bottom of the visual hierarchy (McCrone, 1997). This top-down modulation runs contrary to everything neurophysiologists traditionally believed about the emergence of mental processes - but it is not much of a surprise from the empirical perspective of remote viewing, where the strength and specificity of intent produces data that is highly specific to particular cues (such as visual, auditory, olfactory, emotional, aesthetic impact, etc).

RV analysis presents a particularly fertile area for studying the way in which information is decoded by each viewer. Of course, as in psychoanalysis, symbols are highly individualized and fluctuate with time; the focus also tends to vary, with viewers apparently attracted by different aspects of the target: some viewers tend to produce very detailed technical data while others are more sensitive to landscapes or the emotions and personal rapport of humans detected at the target. Finally, the angle from which a target is "approached" on initial contact, as determined from the post-session analysis of sketches and visual descriptors, seems to vary considerably between individual viewers - with some describing the view from overhead while others approach it from ground level or even the center of the target... This observation, in particular, seems to hide some important clues about the formalism of data encoding and processing in the global information space - perhaps analogous to the sensitivity of specialized neurons to particular lines, angles, directions of movement, etc. (see Diamond & al., 1999)

What, in your opinion, might account for two or more remote viewers seeing the same target from different perspectives, or "picking up" different conceptual aspects?

**RN:** Seems likely to be much the same as in ordinary perception, where most who study the topic agree that it is constructive. We bring to our view of the world the characteristics of the viewer, biases, experience, motivations, etc. I think we should expect something like that, perhaps even more pervasively, in remote viewing.

**SK:** Of course two remote viewers could "pick up" different aspects of the target. Just look at the data from mainstream psychology, especially that concerning eyewitness reports of crimes and accidents. People see events through their own lens, and these lens are based on early experience as well as genetic perceptual differences.

**GZ:** In addressing this question one must keep in mind that the formal RV protocol is based on a model of a viewer fixed in the laboratory and recording incoming impressions, not actually traveling as in the "OOBE" model. Although some RVers occasionally eschew the formal protocol and undertake a "trip" to the target, we need to assume that this question does not allow for that, which would actually create a second and very different question.

Thus when this question refers to 'the angle from which a target is "approached" on initial contact, as determined from the post-session analysis of sketches and visual descriptors', it is already contradicting the protocol assumed to be in operation during the RV session.

It is impossible, however, to draw an image of the target or to describe its appearance without interjecting an apparent visual angle, but one must not impute an actual approach from the data. But a viewing angle does not require an actual approach. One could as well imagine the viewer had used a powerful telescopic capability that could be used from the viewing position. I suppose it would be useful to check whether the recorded viewing angle actually matched what would be seen under those circumstances.

Assuming the answer to that check is "no", then the viewing perspective is just another aspect of the recording, along with the other conceptual aspects picked up. And that simplifies the question.

When something is observed or experienced, a conceptual model of the actual thing that it is, seems to be constructed or encoded by the observer based on the raw sensory data received and the observer's choices in ordering or prioritizing the data. In the RV situation there is no raw sensory data input, but all the other faculties of integrating and modeling, whatever they may be, are there and are used to construct the observer's inner model. We don't know what those faculties are, and we don't know how or of what the model is "constructed". In fact there is a deeper mystery here, because the existence of a model implies that sensory organs etc. are used to view it, and of course this leads to an infinite succession of model making and viewing.

Laughlin, McManus, and d'Aquili in *Brain, Symbol, & Experience* postulate Conscious Network (always capitalized) as the ultimate experiencer in the brain, sidestepping the infinite regress of models viewed by homunculi. But they haven't actually located Conscious Network. It's just another postulate.

Does the literature on consciousness contain any more satisfactory proposition as to how things are experienced? Lacking that, my answer to the current question would be that we need to have a general explanation for conscious experience of ordinary, local objects and events before we can explain features of the remote viewing process.

**MP:** That focus would have strong effect on neuronal firing patterns conforms with the hypothesis that time mirror mechanism is a general mechanism of brain functioning. In this approach neural firing is preceded by a process, which is much like a desire communicated from the top of organization downwards and generating lower level desires. This process proceeds downwards along the hierarchy of magnetic bodies down to the level of sensory organs and from there to brain and brain and CNS finally respond to the process by generating neural activity (remember Libet's findings about time delays of consciousness).

That different viewers pick up different conceptual aspects is quite an interesting finding. If the remote viewer is like a single neuron of a higher level collective self, the personal RV profile

would be analogous to the specialization of the neuron, and also reflect the "wiring" between the "neurons" of the multi-brained higher level self.

**CK:** Actually standard tests of perceptual judgment show that active cognition is able to determine the mode of perceptual discrimination when different strategies of visual assessment of the sameness of two stimuli with respect to two differing populations are proposed.

I have a problem with the preponderance of remote viewing as an idea. I want to explain why it is limited and limiting as a concept. All conscious viewing is essentially remote viewing. Also remote viewing is an attempt to tame and confine the 'otherness' of psychic consciousness.

Firstly remote viewing tends to assume we have a clairvoyant capacity to see other places and know the conditions of those places. However this doesn't in any way address the mystery of intent, the nature of consciousness, or any idea of the after life or disincarnate consciousness. Evidence that there is a mental plane is little help to us unless we can begin to understand the "otherness" - the deep and utterly wild differences this 'abyss' might have. Basically we want remote viewing powers to convince ourselves that life is worth living because it has a supernatural dimension, but we want it to be tame enough that we don't have our own ideas too seriously challenged.

Central to this is the failure of remote viewing to address of itself the paradox of intentionality or how to deal with anticipating reality - not just precognition, but survival through anticipating change in terms of the quantum realm. This is a similar failing to the initial ideas of morphic resonance which were primarily spatial without fully addressing the paradoxes time and intentionality raise about reality. It is only when we begin to consider how present can anticipate future and what kind of universe it is that permits this that we are beginning to face these questions.

**22.** In his work with plant "primary perception", Cleve Backster has repeatedly noted that his subjects only seemed to respond to authentic, spontaneous emotions: for example, a sincere impulse to burn the plant would evoke a marked electrophysiological response, but only pretending to did not (Stone 1994, 1995; Jensen 1997). Furthermore, when he correlated his out-of-laboratory experiences with the polygraph tracings of the experimental plants or cells, he consistently found the significant deviations to coincide with emotional reactions - whereas neutral conversation and events did not produce any remarkable signatures.

How do you interpret these results, especially in light of the preceding discussion? Why would the same mental image (i.e. burning a leaf) only evoke a response when genuine emotion (such as aggression) accompanied it?

**RN:** How could it be otherwise? To the extent there is plant perception, or anomalous perception of any kind, it seems sensible to expect it to penetrate facade and deception as easily as it penetrates the barriers of locality and missing physical medium. In other words, if we are talking about a truly "psychic" phenomenon, we must expect it to operate transparently in a transparent world.

**SK:** I can not comment on this question because I do not consider Backster's work sufficiently well established. The experiments you cite have never been published in a refereed scientific journal.

**MP:** Authentic emotions are necessary if sharing of mental images is involved.

**CK:** If you are talking mental action you have to explain why you think an image of burning will be transmitted but lethal intent or the sense of deceit in cheating will not. Isn't the raw emotion simpler, more direct an organismic reality than a complex image of fire?

**23.** One alternative to the hypothesis of reincarnation would be that past-life memories are simply association basins strengthened by a powerful emotional event - such as when people report that "their life flashed before their eyes" . If there is a non-physical information substrate accounting for anomalous, non-local perception, then one might surmise that a group of trained remote viewers blindly targeting such a case would be able to produce more cohesive data about the "past-life impressions" of a very young child than about his recent memories. Alternatively, blind RV targeting of the previous personality (once a reasonable identification has been made by the field researcher) could give us a clue about which events in his/her life are most salient to remote perception. Comparing these three sets of data (the child's, the viewers' and the objective history of the previous personality) might yield valuable insights into how information is encoded and accessed nonlocally.

How do you feel about such an experiment - do you think there may be anything worth learning from it, and would it be ethical, in your opinion?

**SK:** The proposed experiment would, indeed, produce valuable information. But it would be expensive. Who would fund it?

**JT:** To repeat, the past-life memory cases involve a lot more than just information, and any explanation that starts with an information transfer to explain the other features, the birthmarks, emotions, and behaviors, becomes rather convoluted. Having remote viewers attempt to access facts from the previous life might be interesting, but I'm not sure what it would really tell us. Similarly, having mediums try to contact the previous personality could be very interesting, but interpreting the results might be challenging.

**GZ:** Lian has clarified the first part of this question, up to the word "Alternatively", for me (personal communication).

- The connection of "a powerful emotional event" with the "life flash" experience is a reference to the commonly-reported review experienced at the time of a major life-threatening event or NDE, which are presumed to be powerful emotional events.

- "Case" refers to Ian Stevenson's use of the term, as in "cases suggestive of reincarnation". This does not imply, as I understand it, that the flash life review itself qualifies the case as being suggestive of reincarnation, and in fact I don't believe Lian is suggesting using subjects who have had the life flash experience. The suggestion is simply to remote-view "cases suggestive of

reincarnation", and the purpose would be to determine if information could be developed by RV that could be attributed to previous lives.

Lian asked:

Why would the proposition of a non-physical substrate lead one to surmise that RV would produce this particular result, and why is this limited to a case of a very young child? Given that very young children are more likely to have "past-life impressions", I still don't see why data about those past-life impressions should be more cohesive than recent memories if there is a non-physical substrate.

Lian explained that most RV theories invoke something like a pure information substrate, and reincarnation research suggests the same. Thus past-life memories might be susceptible to probing through RV. Since the bulk of past-life memories would have been recorded by the past personality in a mature state of development, these memories might be more cohesive than the present-life memories of a 3-4 year-old child, and in fact might overwhelm them as well. RV of the previous life could perhaps be used to check on these memories. If the match was not good, various other explanations for them could be considered.

*As to how I would feel about an experiment along the lines of the first part of this question as clarified, I think that the idea is generally logical, but there must be a well-thought-out experimental design; otherwise the results could be rather chaotic. The design should clearly state the issue that the experiment is intended to elucidate. Presumably the point of the experiment is to remote-view the presumed past life in order to shed light on the hypothesis that the subjects' memories are indeed due to a connection with a past-life personality (via the substrate). Is the relative cohesiveness of two sets of memories (present-life and "past") significant and will the differences in cohesiveness themselves be used to select subjects for the experiment? Will a standard RV judging protocol be used, and is it clear how the results will be statistically evaluated? Will the aforementioned cohesiveness enter into the evaluation in some way? (I would expect not, but this question needs to be asked.)*

*The alternative proposed experiment is intended to reveal information about the nature and functioning of the "substrate" or other means of accessing nonlocal information. This one is also interesting, but appears to be less amenable to formal design and more of an exploration. Insights gained from this experiment could then lead into a more structured follow-up study to either test the validity of the insights or to develop further detail.*

*Now as to the ethics - and perhaps this should have been addressed first - I cannot see how these experiments could be considered ethical. Young children are not competent to decide whether or not to enter into such experiments. In matters of health and other vital issues, decisions are expected to be made by the parents. However, these proposed experiments are not vital to the child's well-being, and in fact might well prove to be damaging in some way, such as by revealing information that would actually be hurtful. In this case I cannot support letting the decision as to whether to participate be made by the parents, the child, or by anyone else.*

*In other words, these experiments are unethical and should not be performed.*

**MP:** The experiment would be very interesting. A skeptic would probably argue that the experiment is quite too complex. Concerning the proposed interpretation of re-incarnation: normal personal identity could also be seen as being determined by the mental images that I have/share. For instance, the inhabitant of the TGD Universe identifies himself with his physical body during his biological life and with his magnetic body after his biological death. The personal evolution from highly ego-centered consciousness of a teenager could be seen as a process in which the sharing of mental images gradually delocalizes the contents of consciousness and ego centeredness gradually disappears.

**CK:** The sheaf of incarnation is the unraveling of reincarnation and the afterlife. I am a sheaf of incarnation containing threads of the incarnate in many beings. There is for example no need for me to be reincarnated nor to have past lives to be a living manifestation of another from another time. I may even be born on the epiphany, as I am, and yet not simply a reincarnation of Jesus while at the same time here to unveil the reunion. Furthermore we may each exist at the crest of full organismic consciousness only in the biological frame and still consciousness is eternal from alpha to omega and we are yet witness to the totality in this life.

Again the problem is one of taming the wilderness.

I'm not remote viewing the Messiah - rather I am viewing reality remotely as I stand here in the living flesh - it's a question of being one with my own cubic centimeter of chance.

[References at end of Part 4]