



Holiday Greetings

Lisa and I wish you and yours a most enjoyable Christmas and a productive 2016.

First, we want to thank you for joining this list. We appreciate your continued support. The Association TransCommunication is slowly evolving to a more activist point of view and it is your continued interest that helps us understand we are on the right path.

This is the last Occasional Update for 2015 and the 8th overall. For those of you who are new to this list, I should say that Lisa and I divvy up the duties of running the Association. I (Tom) compose these updates in an effort to compensate for the loss of the news service we offered in the now discontinued ATransC NewsJournal.

New Book in 2016

2016 promises to be an interesting year for our work in support of the Association. You may know that I have been working on a book for at least three years. It looks like it will be published in the first half of the year!

The title of the book is *Implicit Cosmology*. It is around 500 pages as formatted for a 6" X 9" paperback book. There are three sections: Theory (13 essays), Commentaries (9 essays) and Transcommunication (11 essays). It has 81 diagrams, photographs and ITC examples. The book includes a glossary of terms with around 200 entries and something like 200 references. The paperback version will include an index while the eBook version uses numerous internal hyperlinks.

Development of the book began with an effort to update the Survival Hypothesis with lessons learned from ITC. Do you know that the parapsychologists who do not assume these phenomena are imaginary mostly support the Super-psi Hypothesis. When they do refer to the Survival Hypothesis it is typically in terms of the fact that there is one, but seldom offer details. Part of the reason for this lack of detail may be that there are mostly religious, New Age and channeled descriptions of what survival means. These lack the kind of veracity proper scientists can use.

The version of the Survival Hypothesis I use in the book is called Trans-survival Hypothesis to distinguish it from what is referred to by parapsychologists. My qualification includes long-time study of metaphysics, 15 years ATransC co-director and a four-year electronics engineering degree. There are more details of my bio at http://ethericstudies.org/butler_bio.htm. It is important that you do not think I am writing as a parapsychologists or with the authority of a doctorate degree.

The book is unlikely to be well received by the parapsychological community. It is rather complicated and does not lend itself to casual reading. With this in mind, I think of writing it as a continuation of my duties as an ATransC director. As you will see below, the included subjects are all related to things we

deal with on a daily basis. Think of the book as a legacy piece preserving lessons learned while supporting ITC practitioners.

The title, *Implicit Cosmology*, comes from the fact that the cosmology is a logical consequence of the Trans-survival Hypothesis. If it is true, then the cosmology is an extrapolation of what that means for our daily living. Here is the content list:

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We are still deciding if the book will be published by us (ATransC as AA-EVP Publishing) as a print on demand and eBook versions, or if we will try to find a publisher. It will be a lot of work if we publish it but ATransC will earn 30% of the net income from sales. **We are interested in your comments on this.** (tombutler@ethericstudies.org)

SORRAT

We regret to inform you that Tom Richards has made his transition. He and his family have been hosting the experimental minilab for the Society for Research in Rapport and Telekinesis (SORRAT). You can read about the SORRAT at http://atransc.org/examples/examples_other_techniques.htm and Kai Mügge has an excellent write-up on his blog at <http://felixcircle.blogspot.com/2008/09/sorrat.html>.

The Summer 2011 ATransC NewsJournal is attached. It includes a few article about the SORRAT. For now, we do not recommend sending any new letters, as the group will need time to sort out who will continue the study.

Unethical and Unscientific Treatment of Medium

Have you been following my comments about the attack on the FEG medium Kai Mügge by a few parapsychologists? My comments are at <http://ethericstudies.org/essays/>. Especially read the Essay titled, *The Arrogance of Scientific Authority* <http://ethericstudies.org/essays/the-arrogance-of-scientific-authority/>.

The public attack began in Vol. 28, No. 2 of the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* (2014). Since then, there has been a more or less continuous attack on Kai's integrity. I wrote a *letter to the editor* of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) protesting how that organization has continued the attack in their Spring 2015 Paranormal Review. The letter is included below. It was published in the Autumn 2015 issue.

A few concerns may give you a sense of my point of view:

1. It appears that ethical treatment of research subjects was not considered in the study protocol.
2. In effect, the researchers gained more or less unlimited access to their test subject under cover of academic authority. In fact, a PhD in philosophy, a PhD in biology and PhD in psychology do not add up to the necessary academic authority to study a deep-trance physical medium ... unless they were planning to prove fraud.
3. The study was focused on proof even though that has been established under controlled conditions many times since the 1800s. The current need is for research to understand how and why. Based on the team leader's comments to me, it appears they were not sufficiently informed to study the more complex questions.
4. Considerable phenomena were demonstrated under the protocol, but the researchers used roomers and supposition from outside of the protocol to attack the research subject's integrity. The result was kind of a "*The medium produced phenomena but it does not matter because there are rumors that he may have cheated years ago*" report that serves the skeptics more than our community. There is very little objective reporting in any of the essays.
5. The arrogance demonstrated by one of the German researcher is astounding and further demonstrates lack of understanding of the phenomena. He demonstrated this ignorance in the *Fall of the House of Felix* essay which was published in the *Paranormal Review*.
6. The team leader is editor of the peer reviewed journal in which he self-published his attack essay and that of one of the German team member. The essays were published under authority of a scientific organization. Neither essay could possibly have been peer reviewed.
7. Hardly anyone in the lay side of the academic-layperson partition has spoken out, but the three supposed parapsychologists have been all over the Internet repeating their comments about the medium.
8. A very important point is that the three most important English-language parapsychological organizations are involved. The Parapsychological Association helped fund the study, the Society for Scientific Exploration published the first round of attack articles and the Society for Psychical Research furthered the attack by published additional articles and giving the offending team leader an award for some kind of excellence.
9. The researchers hold doctorates in unrelated fields ... unless you assume physical mediumship is fraud or delusion. The psychology degree is appropriate for an anomalous psychological study, but that is only debunking under cover of science.

If you are an ITC practitioner and imagine yourself someday being examined by a parapsychologist, there is no difference between you and Kai. You are as apt to be attacked by trusted scientists. This is a very chilling message for future relationship with science and our prospects of ever receiving learned guidance in our work.

What can You Do?

My first point of advice is that it is time to begin thinking of parapsychology as potential threat to our interests. Think of them as they really are! Most parapsychologists are first psychologists. The most aggressive detractors for our community are psychologists. Anomalous psychology is the study of ways to prove paranormal phenomena are illusion. It is growing in popularity amongst parapsychologists, meaning

you are likely to be studied to see why you are delusional, rather than how you are able to produce phenomena.

There appears to be no standards for parapsychological practices. That is probably why it is okay to *throw your test subject under the bus*. This suggests that, if you are approached to participate in research, for instance as an ITC practitioner or medium, you should consider asking to see a written copy of the protocol. We would be happy to assist your review of the proposed study.

Any research project should include a protocol explicitly describing how the research will be conducted. Comments in the resulting research report should be confined to what came from the protocol. If it is outside of the protocol (as it is in the offending reports) then comments should be confined to future research questions that will address the *additional* findings. As we have seen with the treatment of Kai, you have no protection unless this is a widely accepted standard.

You should also consider requesting the right to review reports before they are published. Again, we are happy to help. In this regard, it is important that we talk amongst ourselves to help review research material and educate ourselves about what is reasonable. As always, the Idea Exchange is available for discussion. (<http://atransc.org/forum/>) We would also love to see a few practices written about these things in the Collective (<http://atransc.org/bp/Collective>).

Most importantly, you can help the community by speaking out. Don't hesitate to write a letter to the editor if you see something that concerns you. An old saying is that dissatisfaction breeds contempt. Let yourself have a little contempt. Make it clear to parapsychologists that a bunch of retired professors using us as play things is not okay.

Letter to the Paranormal Review Editor:

Leo Ruickbie,

Thank you for trying to balance the way Kai Mügge has been treated by giving him an opportunity to speak for himself. However, the question that needs asking is why you gave the supposed researchers a forum to make accusations in the first place. I understand how it could happen when the accuser is also chief editor for the SSE, but you had more control.

From my perspective, treatment of the FEG medium is symptomatic of a culture that treats the paranormal as a playground for retired professors. I am sure it is not intended that way, but however parapsychology sees itself, many of us on the layperson side of the academic-layperson partition have had our high expectations turned into contempt.

Consider these points:

Articles have been self-published in the SSE journal that should never have appeared in a scholarly publication. Such abuse of trust is an example of why many of us feel secret peer review is just a good ol' boy wink and nod that give the false appearance of peer guidance.

From the SPR website: "All papers submitted to the Journal are strictly peer-reviewed, and any opinions expressed are those of the authors alone." That is part of the problem. Peer review implies that articles have been aligned with the policies and practices of the organization. Articles that include ethics violations or unsupported conclusions diminish the respectability of the organization. Organizations cannot publish garbage and blame it on the author.

As an ITC practitioner, I can say with some confidence that production of phenomena on demand is not assured. There was a contract of trust between the FEG medium and the researchers that was violated by the research team. The simple fact is that the medium satisfied that contract. As I understand it, all of the complaints are based on suspicion and assumption alone. The remedy was to include tests for those suspicions in the protocol. Since they were not tested, the accusations are little more than social commentary and have no basis in science.

Negative comments made by “trusted researchers” under cover of academic authority carry considerably more weight than if they were spoken by a person hiding behind a screen name on a discussion board. So not only are the accusations of fraud hurtful and unnecessarily damaging to our community, they are spoken by people others are culturally conditioned to believe without question. That undue authority makes their words especially harmful.

Concepts to ponder: Wizard of Oz Syndrome; Wizard Complex

Consider how this looks: the three parapsychological organizations routinely publish papers that are negative toward survival-related phenomena; a clearly inappropriate article throwing a test subject under the bus is self-published in a “peer-reviewed” journal; and, fellow parapsychologists praise the supposed scientists, even awarding one of them a medal and repeatedly giving them a public platform to perpetuate the offense. What do you expect us to think?

This is grim business. Lacking learned guidance, the paranormal community is already fragmented and in retreat. Instead of helping one another, those who are supposed to be our intellectual leaders turn on us and use our work as a play thing for their retirement years.

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Tom Butler

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The editor included this statement at the end of my letter:

"It is important to give both sides of any debate, even more so in this case when the issue is so hotly contested, which is what I have done. - Ed."

Based on the feedback I have received, one person in the world has read my letter.

The Otherside Press and the American Society for Standards In Mediumship & Psychical Investigation (ASSMPI)

I previously told you that I was writing a column for the [ASSMPI's The Otherside Press](#) online publication. This is no longer the case. The organization has the potential of being an important part of our community but it is pretty much directed to commercial mediums.

There is also something of a disconnect between mediumship and ITC. Because our community is so small and young, we feel that collaboration is very important. For that reason, all of our material is under the [Creative Commons share alike use license](#). The ASSMPI does not appear to follow that practice.

Consequently, all of the essays I wrote for them were more closed than I like. For instance, the right click copy feature is turned off. (All of those essays are now under the Essay tab in EthericStudies.org

That's it for this update. My apologies for such a long update, the issues are rather complex. I know this issue has a strident tone. It has been disturbing to feel it necessary to publicly attack a member of our community. Just as the parapsychologist's actions harm our community and the medium, so does my response harm the community and give comfort to our detractors. No one benefits. At the same time, not speaking out only sends the message that such treatment is okay. It would be less awkward if others also spoke out.

Again, we trust you and yours will have a wonderful Christmas season and New Year.

Tom

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