

Viewpoint

Wishing You a Happy and Healthy New Year

The Winter *ATransC NewsJournal* has become a tradition of our holidays for twelve years now. Usually beginning in October, articles for the NewsJournal are selected and drafted to fit. The pages need to be formatted for twenty pages and the whole issue must be proofread—usually four times! Then it must be sent to the printer, stamped (for those receiving it via snail mail), taken to the post office and emailed to those receiving it via email.

This process is always done during the hustle and bustle of the holidays, and during this time, we always think of our members and our shared interest in spirit communication and survival with great fondness.

We know firsthand how many members are missing their loved ones and even dear pets during this time of year. All of our personal mentors are now on the other side, and in just this past few months we have lost two close friends. One of our friends and sitter in the Socrates Circle, Steve, just had his 22 year-old son cross over from a tragic fall off a roof. It has been a sad couple of months even when we know that death is not the end of life.

In 1970, 77 percent of Americans said they knew the reality of the afterlife. In 2000, this number had increased to 82 percent. There are many studies that show after-death communication is very common. One study showed 50 percent of widowers reported visions of their departed spouses and another reported an even larger number.

In 1988, Bill and Judy Guggenheim started the ADC Project (after-death.com) in which 3,300 people were interviewed who had experienced an after-death communication. The accounts of those experiences would convince anyone with an open mind that our loved ones are alive and well after their transition. They are just not in a physical form and exist somewhere that we don't quite understand.

People often don't talk about their after-death communication experiences for fear of not being believed, or even worse, being called delusional. This is especially true of physicians and psychotherapists who often hear about these experiences and yet don't feel comfortable talking about them. But when given a safe place to talk, they don't

just tell the stories that come from their patients, but their own personal stories as well, of things that are beyond scientific understanding. Dr. Charles Tart has personally seen this and set up The Archives of Scientists' Transcendent Experiences for just this purpose. (issc-taste.org)

The October 2012 *Newsweek* featured a cover story by the neurosurgeon Dr. Eben Alexander. He endured a seven-day coma after bacterial meningitis attacked his brain. Contrary to the assumptions

of medical science, Alexander says that he was fully conscious during this period—but conscious of another place.

A successful neurosurgeon who has taught at Harvard Medical School and other universities, Alexander says that he spent his life dismissing claims of out-of-body experiences and refuting such talk with scientific logic until he himself had this near-death experience. He says that, during the time that he was in a coma, he saw heaven and knows the afterlife exists.

Raymond Moody wrote, "Dr. Eben Alexander's near-death experience is the most astounding I have heard of in more than four decades of studying this phenomenon." Moody says that "the circumstances of [Alexander's] illness and his impeccable credentials make it very hard to formulate a mundane explanation for his case." Dr. Alexander is sharing his experience in his new book, *Proof of Heaven*. That his story made the cover of *Newsweek* with a headline reading "Heaven is Real: A Doctor's Experience of the Afterlife," is very positive for our beliefs.

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Wisdom Seeds of Light by H. Koppdelaney
[flickr.com/photos/h-k-d/3551548997](https://www.flickr.com/photos/h-k-d/3551548997)

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Article Contributions: Articles that explain techniques, the concepts of transcommunication and/or provide a role model to which others can aspire are considered. The average column is 425 words—fewer with pictures. Articles should be short and to the point as they would be for a newspaper. Feature articles may be up to four columns, serialized or presented as a brief which refers to the full article which can be placed on the Association website. Announcements of member activities and reports of successes working with these phenomena with brief comments about your observations, are welcome. Email submission to atranscom@aol.com or mail to Association TransCommunication, PO Box 13111, Reno, NV 89507, USA.



Tom and Lisa Butler

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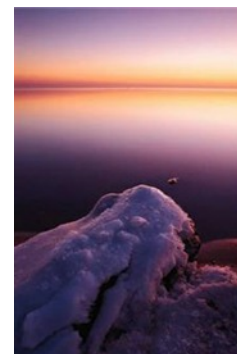


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Thinking of You

by Allison Sniffin

I feel very blessed to earn my living in music, the thing I trained for. I play several instruments and sing, and I travel. Before each “job” I check to be sure I don’t forget any accessory like mouthpiece for the French horn or organ shoes for the organ. In the case of jobs involving electronic instruments, I start my inventory way in advance because the accessory list can be long: cables, speakers, extension cords, adapters, etc.

This summer I gave a show in upstate New York. The inventory included a small plastic unit which screws onto a microphone stand. When I returned to New Jersey the day after the show, I carefully placed the plastic unit—a specialized piece of equipment—in a drawer with speaker cables. I wouldn’t need it for a long time, but at least I’d know where to find it.

Two days later, I played organ for a wedding. I wore shoes designed for playing the organ pedals. After the wedding, I returned the shoes to the bottom of my closet.

Months passed and in the fall, I began inventory for a new show that would involve electronic instruments and accessories. I opened the drawer where I’d put the plastic unit but now it wasn’t there. I looked in some other “logical” places; scratched my head. “It will turn up eventually,” I thought, but I couldn’t take the chance of not finding it (the show was next week). I ordered a new plastic unit; the show with the new unit took place; and afterward, I firmly taped the unit to the speaker and set it at the top of my closet.

A couple of days later my schedule showed an organ rehearsal in the evening. I placed my organ shoes on a chair hours before my commute so I’d remember them; when it was time to leave. I carried them with me in a plastic bag.

A new ATransC NewsJournal had just come with an article showing telephone diagrams and during my commute, I hunkered down with it. I imagined contacting Sonia Rinaldi: what questions would I ask my mom, Shirley, through Sonia? Not questions about small things (*Did you make the spatula move the other day?*). They should be sufficiently open-ended (*What metaphor would you use to describe your life now vs. your life with us? What would you like to tell me or Bill [her son]?*) Because, if my dreams lately were any indication, spirit prefers parables. I pondered, really, how close *is* Mom and family? I despair when I think they’ve moved on to greater things. But maybe they’re also

right beside me. I wished there could be a sign.

As soon as I arrived at my rehearsal, I plucked my organ shoes out of the plastic bag. As I started to put them on, I saw that the thing which by now I’d all but forgotten about—the plastic unit—was nestled inside one of the shoes. It had to be the old plastic unit, since the new one was taped to the speaker at the top of my closet.

I knew it was Mom! When I became a young adult and moved away from home I’d visit my parents a couple of times a year. At the end of my visits Mom and I would play a hide-and-seek game with each other. Near the end of each visit, one of us would hide a small object (usually the same object over a period of months) in a suitcase, or under a pillow, or in a shoe—somewhere where one of us would sooner or later find it and think of the other.

A week later (as I write this), the new plastic unit is still taped to the speaker at the top of my closet. The old unit is now in the drawer, stowed safely along with the speaker cables. I won’t need it for a long time, but at least I know where to find it.



Shirley holding Meeny

Big Circle Recording Dates

Loved ones on both sides of the veil who cooperate to communicate and help one another are known as the “Big Circle.” In some instances, loved ones in the etheric have even guided people to the Association.

This “bridge to the afterlife” is maintained when people join their energies on alternate Thursdays at 8:00 PM **local time** to communicate via EVP. You are invited to join in, perhaps by inviting friends and family members to sit with you for a brief meditation to focus your attention on the loved one you wish to contact, and then recording for three-to-five minutes. Here are the recording dates:

**January 3, 17 and 31, February 14 and 28,
March 14 and 28 and April 11 and 25**

See: atransc.org/circle/about_the_big_circle.htm

You can send your results to Tom and Lisa at atranscom@aol.com, but we also encourage you to share your results in the Big Circle forum on the Idea Exchange at <http://atransc.org/forum/>. Be sure to post any names you record. Members sometimes record messages that are specifically intended for another member.

IPATI Listening Team

by Sonia Rinaldi, Brazil

Some people still think that Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) transcontacts are difficult to hear, hard to understand voices. This is not always true; at least not with the techniques that have been developed by the volunteers of IPATI (translation from Portuguese: Institute for Advanced Research in Instrumental Transcommunication). These techniques produce a large number of voices of great quality in a single recording. We know this, because long ago we created a support group we affectionately call the "Team of the Eared." This name emerged, of course, because their job is to evaluate our recordings.

Since IPATI is a research institute, it is necessary to do more than simply record for EVP and listen to the results. On the contrary, information is everything and everything must be studied. Only by evaluating the results can we gain an understanding of these communications and possibly find a way to improve them.

The Listening Team

A team of fifty-three members has been formed out of the more than six hundred volunteer members of IPATI. It is captained by Marlene Bernardo who has the invaluable support of Rita Seiler who is responsible for assembling the evaluation worksheets and Reinaldo Brito who is responsible for compiling all the data into graphs.

This great team of collaborators is a mix of people with all types of hearing, from those who have acute hearing to those who have difficulty hearing. They also have different equipment such as different sound cards or headphones. This mixture of ability and equipment allows us to obtain a more accurate estimate of the quality of our recordings.

Cláudia's Story



Cláudia

Cláudia Moretto, friend and IPATI volunteer, was thirty-six when she decided it was time to have a baby. That was, more or less, three years ago. She arranged to make an EVP recording with her friend, Nilzinha, so that she could be guided by the head of the "Broadcasting Station" [in the

etheric], which we call Mr. German. Both had learned to record for EVP using Skype, a technique we developed in IPATI and used when sessions need to be conducted at a distance. With this, Cláudia asked about the possibility of becoming pregnant and had as an answer: - "**No momento, deixar**" (translation: "At the moment, leave"). Knowing the way our German friend speaks, it became clear that Cláudia's attempts to become pregnant would not work.

After having no success for a year, Cláudia conducted another EVP session through our station to ask the same question. Mr. German's response was, "**Em Breve**" (translation: "Soon").

Some months passed and Cláudia was undecided whether to undergo an in vitro fertilization treatment to conceive. That's when she made one more recording and Mr. German said: "**Vai ser mãe... mas precisar esforço**" (translation: "Will be a mother ... but will require effort"). With this answer, Cláudia did not hesitate to initiate the treatment and became pregnant on the first try.

This report is based on the recordings made in January, 2011 - when she was preparing for the birth of her child; due at the end of the month. Cláudia made transcontact at that time because she wanted to have the support of our trusted friends for the delivery. The answers from the session recorded via SKYPE were surprising.

Listening Team Analysis of EVP

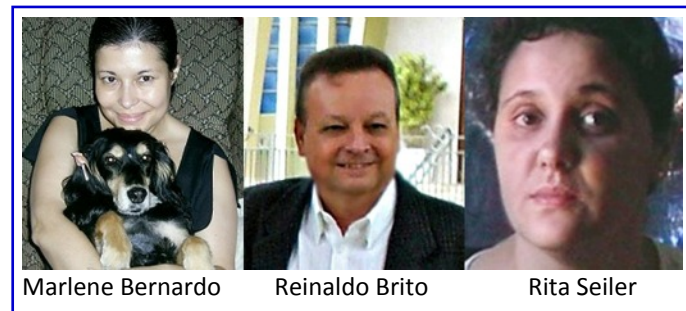
The first table is from a worksheet prepared by Reinaldo, which was assembled by Rita and conveyed to the team to be used in the evaluation of EVP examples by Marlene. The table includes what is thought to be said by the etheric communicator and how the team member classified the sample. The two columns at the right indicate when the response was recorded in relationship to the question:

"A" indicates the response came before the question

"D" indicates the response came after the question

The messages are concerned with Cláudia and the birth of her child, Lorenzo. Mr. Orator is one of the "Broadcasting Station." Original text is in Portuguese. The complete report and translation to English is provided by Sonia at:

ipati.org/boletins/ingles/nv/bol27/ptbr27_en.html.



Marlene Bernardo

Reinaldo Brito

Rita Seiler

Continued page 5



Case: Cláudia		Quality				When	
Item	Content	A+	A	B	C	A	D
1	Question: Mr. Orator, does Lorenzo have the consciousness of an adult or is it that of a child? EVP: <i>"Tanto religioso"</i> (Translation: Very religious) Commentary: We find it curious that Mr. Orator responded in this way, but in fact, the concept voiced by Cláudia is essentially concerned with spirit ... (other religions disagree with this view of consciousness). She was curious about the process of conscience formation during pregnancy. Somehow, Mr. Orator found it very "religious."	10	5	2	0		1
5	EVP: <i>"Estará sentada e dá ponto."</i> (Translation: Will be sitting and receive stitches) Commentary: Interestingly, immediately after the delivery, which was normal, Cláudia was able to sit and get Lorenzo to breast feed. She did require stitches but it was all very calm.	2	3	7	5		
6	EVP: <i>"Vai apressada!!!"</i> (Translation: Go hasty!!!) Commentary: This was also curious. This record was made via Skype, with Cláudia speaking from Itatiba and Sonia recording in São Paulo. While Sonia heard her, she noticed Cláudia was speaking very fast, so she told her: "Cláudia, speak slowly!" and Mr. German hearing that filed this endorsement!	6	5	4	2		
10	Question: Lorenzo is my brother, isn't he Mr. German? Is he reincarnating? EVP: <i>"Tenho recado, é."</i> (Translation: I have message, yeah.) Commentary: Her brother, João, died due to complications from a disease and now will come to be Lorenzo. He will require commitment—in other words, she has to be careful.	3	5	7	2		1
17	Question: When we talk to him... EVP: <i>"Escuta bem lá."</i> (Translation: Listen fine there.) Commentary: She asked if the baby listens when she talks to him. And this is confirmed, he listens well from inside her belly.	2	6	7	2		1
20	EVP: <i>"Abraço, com amor, em grávida."</i> (Translation: Hugs, with love, in pregnant.) Commentary: He likes her a lot! These words are a very loving gesture!	3	5	3	6		

Selected entries from a listening team worksheet

In this case, seventeen members of the team voted to classify the examples as about 31.5% of A+ quality, 26.6% of A quality, 25.3% of B quality and 16.6% of C quality.

An amazing phenomenon in transcommunication is that a high percentage of the answers come before the question. So, besides the quality of the examples, the team also considered the time the answers came in the recordings in relationship to the question.

For the recording made by Cláudia, Rita considered the position of the responses and Reinaldo produced the chart.

The chart summarizes something important: Of the twenty-three samples, six paranormal answers came before the questions, nine came after and eight of them appeared related to the situation but not the questions. In other words, they are data or comments that Mr. German wanted to make on his own.

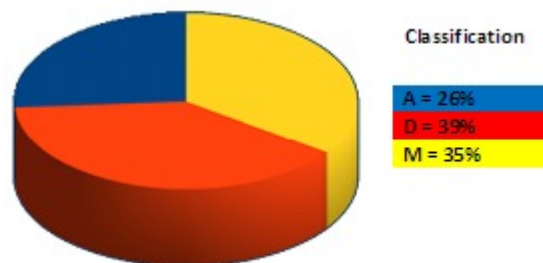
Graphics for Cláudia's Case

The audio samples are classified as:

- A+ = Very clearly understood audio
- A = Audio of average clarity
- B = Reasonably clear audio
- C = Poor audibility

Position of the Answers			
	Before	After	Between
Total:	6	9	8
Percent:	26.09	39.13	34.78
Number of Examples: 23			

Recording Quality				
Quality:	A+	A	B	C
Total:	123	104	99	65
Percent:	31.5	26.6	25.3	16.6
Number of Examples: 391				
Conference: OK		Quantity Stored: 23		



Discussion

These studies are repeated for each recording session. They provide valuable information that helps to develop a clearer impression of these phenomena.

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The Resolution of Grief by Guided Afterlife Connections

by R. Craig Hogan, Ph.D. ©

Jordan and Neimeyer's review of studies measuring the effectiveness of grief counseling concluded, "... perhaps the central finding of these reviews is that grief counseling does not appear to be very effective, most probably because many of the people who received it would do just as well (and perhaps in some cases better) without it."¹ Five years later, in 2008, Neimeyer presented the results of his continued research into the effectiveness of grief counseling in a paper with Joseph Currier at the Association for Death Education and Counseling annual conference, with a similar conclusion: grief counseling has only a slightly helpful effect, and the effect is sustained for only a short time after the intervention ends.²

A study of the effectiveness of physicians in helping people suffering grief came to the same conclusion. Physicians were taught to use a method of bereavement counseling named PBC (Primary Bereavement Care). Evaluation of the effects of the counseling on their grieving patients found that this physician intervention method **"does not significantly improve the intensity of bereavement measured by GEI (Grief Experience Inventory) and TRIG (Texas Revised Inventory of Grief)."**³

Grief is persistent, defying interventions by counselors or physicians to help the grieving person.

However, positive effects have resulted from encounters grieving people have with their loved ones after the passing. In a study reported in *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, researchers examined subjects' accounts of post-death encounters and their positive effects on the bereaved. Their findings were that, "The encounters profoundly affected the participants' beliefs in an afterlife and attitudes toward life and death, and had a significant effect on their grief. Finally, post-death encounters had a healing effect on the participants by contributing to a sense of connectedness with the deceased. We conclude that health care professionals and counselors should be educated about post-death encounters so that the bereaved can share their experiences in a supportive and understanding atmosphere."⁴

The authors of that study were referring to spontaneous after-death contacts, such as encounters in dreams. However, psychotherapists today have developed protocols that help their clients have afterlife connections with their deceased loved ones at will during psychotherapy sessions. In 1995, Allan Botkin developed a protocol for intentionally engendering these connections that he named Induced After-Death Communication (IADC™). He used a method

of stimulating the right and left sides of the brain called bilateral stimulation. The bilateral stimulation method he used is named EMDR (eye movement desensitization and reprocessing). In EMDR, the psychotherapist has the client move his or her eyes left and right repeatedly while focusing on a distressing memory. Dr. Botkin added the instruction to "be open to whatever happens." The result was the sense of an afterlife connection in 70% of the

sessions, lasting 5 seconds to 15 minutes. He described the connections as most often a smiling face or sense of the presence of the deceased. Dr. Botkin has observed that the encounters consistently have a positive effect on the client's grief.

In 2010, Rochelle Wright learned Dr. Botkin's protocol and redesigned it, creating a new method of helping clients have afterlife connections with the deceased that she named Guided Afterlife Connections. Wright uses the eye movements, but adds auditory bilateral stimulation by playing music or sounds through a headset that alternate in volume between the left and right ears. In addition, her enhanced method focuses on



Rochelle Wright, originator of the Guided Afterlife Connections method

allowing those in the afterlife to guide the experience, does not interrupt the unfolding process to redirect the client to focuses other than those being brought to the client naturally, and places no time limits on the duration of the experience. The Guided Afterlife Connections method has resulted in afterlife connections in 100% of the sessions in which it has been used to date. The connections may last for an hour or more and usually consist of active encounters with the deceased, such as receiving messages, ... walking together, hugging and even kissing. The clients report that their grief dramatically diminishes or is extinguished by the connections, and their lives are changed.

Knowing that this form of grief therapy has such a dramatic effect on the clients' grief, we wanted to evaluate formally the degree to which the clients' grief is diminished by the Guided Afterlife Connections experience. As a result, a study was performed using the Subjective Units of Distress scale (SUDS) commonly employed in EMDR psychotherapy to evaluate how disturbing a memory is for the client. The study used 45 subjects who participated in Guided Afterlife Connections procedures with Rochelle Wright, M.S., originator of the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure. It compared SUDS scale ratings at the beginning of the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure with SUDS scale ratings of the same memories during or after the procedure. This report describes the methods used in the study and results.

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Resolution of Grief

Continued from page 6

Sample Used

... For this study, only memories with pre-session ratings of 8 or higher were included in the sample. The result was 189 memories among the 45 clients. All of the sessions were facilitated by Rochelle Wright. All of the afterlife connections happened in one session. The median time was four hours. Longer sessions usually involved some psychotherapy work along with the Guided Afterlife Connection.

Methodology

[Please see endnote] ... The SUDS instrument [a 10-point scale commonly used in EMDR psychotherapy] is useful in providing a scale on which clients can assign their own evaluations of the disturbance using their own criteria for each number. The SUDS scale has great value in giving the client a method of expressing the subjective level of disturbance that cannot easily be expressed in words.

At the outset of the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure, the client puts on a headset playing barely audible sounds or music that alternate in volume between the left and right ears to provide audio bilateral stimulation. The psychotherapist then asks the client to describe the person for whom they are grieving, focusing especially on the death and period after the death.... This open-ended description of the memories may take an hour or more....

The psychotherapist then explains the SUDS scale to the client and goes through the entire list of memories, repeating the words the client used to describe each memory, asking the client to rate how disturbing the memory is on the 0 to 10 SUDS scale.... These we call pre-session SUDS ratings....

At the end of the session, the psychotherapist assesses the level of disturbance for those memories that were rated highest on the SUDS scale at the beginning of the session. The result is a record of the pre-session SUDS scale ratings for the memories, mid-session ratings for some of the memories, and post-session ratings for all of the most disturbing memories.

For this study, the pre-session SUDS scale ratings were compared with the mid-session and post-session ratings to determine the magnitude of the reduction in the client's assessments of how much the memories disturbed him or her. That, then, is an indication of the effect the Guided

Afterlife Connection has had on the clients' grief.

Results

[Please see endnote] ...

Degree of Disturbance During or at the End of the Session

When the same memories were evaluated during or at the end of the session, the SUDS ratings had reduced dramatically....

Magnitude of the Reduction in Disturbance

If the ratings that were over 10 are reduced to 10, the average pre-session SUDS rating for all of the memories was 9.91 on the 10-point scale. After the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure, the average mid-session and post-session SUDS rating for all of the memories was 1.42. The average reduction between the pre-session SUDS ratings and the mid- and post-session ratings was 8.5 points on the 10-point scale....

Anecdotal Comments

All of the participants made spontaneous comments about their state of mind after the sessions. These comments are

indications of the reduction in grief and impact on the clients' lives of the Guided Afterlife Connection. A sample of the comments follows:

"It doesn't seem to matter anymore."

"Before, it seemed like his thing was the worst thing in the world. Now it feels like seeing him so joyous and at peace has lifted a weight off of me."

"I feel peaceful. I feel calm."

"I'm feeling peaceful. I'm

happy."

"I feel light as a feather."

"I feel kind of like laughing. I feel very light hearted."

"The Guided Afterlife Connection took the pain of it away. When I think of him, it doesn't really bother me anymore."

"I'm in a state of bliss. Thank you."

"I feel calm and relaxed. I felt her saying the words. I felt her presence like when I'm dreaming."

"This was the most profound experience of my life."

"It literally, literally changed my memory."

"The memory doesn't register. It doesn't even register."

"I see the sun and can feel the breezes once more. I have a knowing my new leaves will dance and give nutrients to my new roots. Thank you."



On the Edge of the Universe by Aurelia M. Perez

[flickr.com/photos/aurelia-m-perez/7102270133/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/aurelia-m-perez/7102270133/)

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Types of Phone Calls From the Dead

by Cal Cooper

[This is an excerpt from a paper Cal Cooper wrote for the *Journal of Research Into the Paranormal*, Volume 44, November 2010.]

Apart from the work of Rogo and Bayless (1979), very little academic research on phone calls from the dead can be found either in journals or parapsychology text books. The occurrence of EVP itself was not reported until 1959 when Swedish film maker Friedrich Jürgenson (Bender, 1972, p. 65) claimed he had successfully recorded voices of the dead (Rogo and Bayless, 1979). The fact that EVP was not noticed in parapsychology until this time could have a number of explanations; the subject matter itself can be approached from many angles such as psychology, physics or as a genuine paranormal phenomenon. However, the events themselves fall into the parapsychological category of "survival of human personality" after death, which was classically discussed by Myers (1903). Therefore we should consider phone calls from the dead as an aspect of parapsychology even though the phenomenon itself is exceedingly rare compared to everything else that is covered in the field.

The work by Rogo and Bayless (1979) on phone calls from the dead found that these fell into different categories according to conversation length and detail within it. The four main call types in Rogo and Bayless's (1979) research implied the involvement of a supposedly dead caller and the fifth (unusual) type involved the living. These are described as follows:

Type 1

Simple Calls

These are the most common reported phone calls from the dead. The dead caller says only a few words and is unresponsive to any questions asked. At this point the caller may say nothing at all and the line will go dead without any sound of the caller hanging up the phone or being cut off.

Type 2

Prolonged Calls

These calls are rarer than Type 1. They last for some time and involve a conversation like any other telephone call. The recipient does not realize, until after the call, that the caller was in fact dead at the time. Due to the recipient of the call not knowing the caller is dead, this somehow seems to allow the conversation to last longer. Type 1 cases of

simple calls show that the shock of knowing the caller is dead somehow leaves the conversation short or the dead caller unresponsive.

Type 3

Answer Calls

These are cases where a living person makes a call to someone they do not realize is dead and yet they get an answer. These calls are usually prolonged.

Type 4

Apparent Calls

Most cases of phone calls from the dead involve a dead person calling a living person. The receiver of the call may

or may not know that the caller is dead. Thus it may create a prolonged phone call or simple call. This is simply a possible mixture of Type 1 and Type 2 calls.

Type 5

Intention Calls

These are calls in which we intend to call someone with a specific conversation in mind. However, for some reason we choose to postpone the call until a later time. You then receive a call from the person you intended to call. They refer to you calling earlier and discussing with them the topic you were going to discuss, or they call you answering your message to call them about that topic. Essentially they received the message from someone with your voice, who carried out your intended conversation which you never made,

although you had the intention to do so. These are very much like apparitions of living people, but in this case involving phone conversations.

This type of call was even experienced by D. Scott Rogo:

"It was 4 o'clock on a bright Thursday afternoon, and I was lying on my living room couch thinking about making a phone call to a psychologist I knew at the U.C.L.A. Neuropsychiatric Institute. Although I intended to make the call, I never did. About six that evening though, I got the shock of my life when a call came in from the Institute and from the office of the very psychologist I had thought about calling. The call was from her research assistant saying that he was 'answering my message'. When I asked what in blazes he was talking about, he told me at 4pm a call had come in to them from me. The caller had left my name, and had asked the call be returned!"



Call Home by Chiaralily
flickr.com/photos/chiaralily/5273432866/



A Research Study into the Interpretation of EVP

Mark Leary, Ph.D.

Anyone who has listened to even a few EVP recordings knows how difficult they are to interpret. Listeners often disagree, sometimes strongly, regarding what a particular EVP seems to say, which raises questions about the validity of each person's interpretation. Yet, the usefulness of EVP depends on the degree to which investigators can trust one another's interpretations of the EVP that they record. Although a great deal has been written about the possible mechanisms that produce EVP and the types of equipment that are most effective in recording them, EVP enthusiasts have devoted far less attention to problems associated with interpreting the sounds that are recorded.

After observing repeated disagreements among investigators (and rarely feeling that the interpretations of EVP on paranormal television shows match what I hear), I undertook a study to examine how serious the problem really is. The study that I conducted had two main goals: to document the degree to which investigators agree or disagree on their interpretations of EVP and to create a means of identifying which interpretation of a particular EVP is most likely to be "correct."

The Study

To obtain a set of EVP for analysis, I contacted a number of paranormal investigators who had conducted systematic investigations at the Ferry Plantation House in Virginia Beach, Virginia. I received over 250 EVP, from which I chose 94 that were among the clearest in terms of having obvious vocal characteristics. These recordings came from eleven investigators who recorded them across seven different investigations. In general, investigators seemed to submit what they viewed as particularly good EVP, all of them recorded without a background noise source.

I then recruited 24 individuals (10 men, 14 women) with paranormal investigation experience to listen to and interpret the 94 audio clips. The raters ranged in age from 29 to 62, with an average age of 46. All but two of them currently belonged to active paranormal investigation groups.

The raters were sent a CD with the audio clips, along with a form for interpreting the EVP and a background information questionnaire. Raters listened to each EVP as many times as needed, wrote down each word that they heard (putting an asterisk for any words they could not under-

stand), indicated any emotion that they detected in the voice, and rated their confidence that their interpretation of the EVP was correct. The background questionnaire asked about raters' age and sex, their interests and beliefs in the paranormal, and included a brief measure of basic personality dimensions (such as extraversion, emotional stability and agreeableness).

Determining Agreement

Although we can never know for sure what an EVP "really" says, my analysis of raters' interpretations was based on the assumption that a particular interpretation of an EVP that is made independently by several people is more likely to be "correct" than an interpretation that is made by only a few individuals. For example, if seven out of ten people who listen to an EVP hear exactly the same words, two other individuals hear a different set of words and the remaining person hears something else entirely, the interpretation on which the seven people agreed would be more likely to reflect the actual sounds than the other individuals' idiosyncratic interpretations.

Thus, to begin, I determined a "consensus interpretation" for each EVP by counting the number of times that raters reported hearing various words. For example, whatever first word was heard by the most raters became the first word of the consensus interpretation. Whatever second word was heard by most raters was the second word of the consensus interpretation, and so on. In this way, I came up with the most common (or consensus) interpretation for each EVP.

With the consensus interpretation in hand, I then calculated the percentage of raters who agreed with the consensus interpretation. This number could range from 0% (no two raters reported hearing the same thing) to 100% (all raters agreed with the consensus interpretation) and is an index of the degree to which raters independently agreed in their interpretations of each EVP.

Of the 94 EVP, the one with the highest agreement ("What's going on?") was listed by 83% of the raters. That is, 83% of the raters listed the consensus interpretation for this EVP. However, the overall agreement for the entire set of EVP was much lower. Across all 94 EVP, average agreement with the consensus interpretation was only 21%. In other words, only about 1 out of 5 raters gave an interpretation that agreed with the most common (and, presumably most "accurate") interpretation.

When analyzed at the level of particular words rather than the entire EVP, average agreement was 35%. Raters agreed with the most common interpretation of each specific word on about 1 out of every 3 words on average.

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Media Watch

by Lisa Butler

The Reality of the Afterlife

Craig Hogan has created a website called After Death Communication Guides (adcguides.com). The site is devoted to providing information about the afterlife and spiritual growth, focusing especially on the recorded descriptions of the afterlife given by people who are now living there, conveyed through direct-voice mediums.

Hogan writes, "The afterlife is as real as this life. Volumes of research data, verified accounts of experiences, and recordings of people from the afterlife are available today. The mass of evidence testifies that the afterlife is a reality. However, in spite of the vast array of evidence, Western culture still lives in ignorance about what happens after a person dies. The truth was obscured first by the church that dominated Western culture, then by materialism that took hold of Western thought. Both suppressed evidence about the afterlife because it ran counter to their doctrines. They derided or persecuted anyone who spoke of the life after this life. They continue to do so today."

"As a result, Western culture has lived in a dark age of ignorance about the afterlife. Today, that is changing. Television and the Internet have allowed humankind to learn about the evidence for the afterlife and the nature of the realm that everyone enters after leaving the earthly plane. The result is the renaissance of spiritual realization we are now just beginning to experience. It's an exciting time to be alive."

Many Children Hear Voices

Reuters Health recently reported on a study that found one in ten, seven and eight-year-old children heard voices that "weren't there." The team found that the voices were not generally troublesome or disruptive to the children's thinking and had a limited impact on their daily lives.

Up to sixteen percent of mentally healthy children and teenagers may hear voices, researchers note in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*. They add that hearing voices can signal heightened risk of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders in later life, but the "great majority" of young people who have these experiences never become mentally ill.

The researchers looked at 3,870 primary schoolchildren from Groningen in the Netherlands. All were asked whether they heard "one or more voices that only you and no one else could hear" in the past year. Nine percent answered, "yes." Only fifteen percent of these said the voices caused them serious suffering, and nineteen percent said they interfered with their thinking. Boys and girls were equally likely to report hearing voices, but girls were more likely to report suffering and anxiety because of the voices.

While past studies have linked complications in the womb, or during early infancy with the likelihood of

hearing voices, Bartels-Velthuis and her team found no such relationship. The researcher said she and her colleagues had expected that hearing voices would be more common among urban children than among their rural peers, but to their surprise, the contrary was the case. "We have no explanation for this finding," she said.

From: "Many children 'hear voices'; most aren't bothered," *Reuters Health*, 01/2512010.

The Experimenter Effect

Research done by Dr. Caroline Watt at the Koestler Parapsychology Unit at Edinburgh University looked at the effect an experimenter's belief had on experiments and participants. Fake experimenters were recruited and divided into one of two groups based on their belief in the paranormal and psi. After training, the new experimenters were asked to carry out the same psi task with a number of novice participants. There was a strong difference in results. With disbelievers as investigators there was no suggestion of psi in the experimental results, however with believers there was very strong positive result. The expectations of the participants were broadly similar, as they had been given little information on experimenters; in particular, they had no idea if the person they were working with was a believer or not. (**PSI:** Psychic phenomena are associated with an undefined force known by the term "psi")

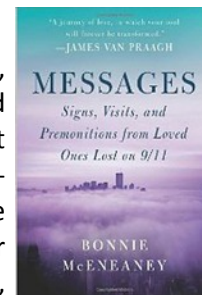
From: *Paranormal Review*, Issue 52, Society for Psychical Research, spr.ac.uk.

Messages

When Bonnie McEneaney's husband, Eamon, died in the attacks on the World Trade Center, she thought she had lost him forever. And then something unexpected happened. She began to have experiences that convinced her that her husband, in spirit, was sending signs, indeed messages, that he was present and watching over his family. The experience has shaken her to the core and reassured her that her husband is still with her.

Bonnie was quite skeptical of the spiritual world but after talking to a number of other families and friends of loved ones lost on 9/11, she realized she was not alone. Numerous others connected to the tragedy described their own premonitions, signs, dreams, visitations and communications through mediums. Bonnie began recording their stories and shares them in *Messages* with her own heartfelt message of comfort and hope for all those who are searching for their own deeper connections, proving that love and relationships can continue after death.

Publisher: William Morrow, 2010, ISBN-13: 978-0061974076



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Media Watch

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Improving Your Extra Sensory Perception

It is now possible to improve your Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) skills by using your iPhone. The iPhone ESP trainer was originally developed under a NASA program by Russell Targ at Stanford Research Institute. According to *ESPresearch.com*, "We have found that people are able to improve their ESP scores by using a machine like this, and get in touch with the part of themselves that is psychic.... It can enhance your life in many surprising ways." Users report that the game is simple, but addictive. The player attempts to predict which of four colored squares the application has chosen. A right answer causes the device to vibrate and provide positive feedback.

In a year-long NASA program with 145 subjects, many people significantly improved their scores. The ESP Trainer is available at iTunes store.

Education Counters Fear of Dying

A study conducted by Claudia Fabiana Siracusa of the University of Granada, Spain indicates that people with a university degree fear death less than those at a lower literacy level. Fear of death is more common among women than men, which affects their children's perception of death. In fact, 76% of children who report fear of death fear death due to their mothers avoiding the topic. Additionally, more of these children fear early death and adopt unsuitable approaches when it comes to dealing with death.

This study revealed the need for a change in mentality within families and at school regarding death and the end of life. The reason is that an appropriate approach to death is key to children's health and personality. Other conclusions were that children—to a higher or lower degree—have had experiences related to death, that they believe in life after death and that they are concerned about it. Additionally, it is more common among girls to believe in life after death than among boys. In the light of the results obtained, researchers consider it essential to provide death education "as a way to value life, and an instrument to end with the misguided and unreal idea transmitted by the media...."

From: eurekaalert.org

A Good Death

Dr. Peter Fenwick, the president of the Scientific and Medical Network (SMN), says that the medical profession is not handling death very well and considers it as a failure. Fifty percent of complaints to the National Health Service hospitals in the UK center are on how they handle deaths, including not allowing patients to die naturally. Dr. Fenwick stresses the desirability of having a "good death," which he describes as a time of reconciliation and serenity. He has co-authored a booklet, *End-Of-Life Experiences, A Guide For Carers Of The Dying*, with Sue Brayne in associa-

tion with Southampton University to help provide spiritual support at the end of life. The book is available online at: horizonresearch.org/Uploads/END_OF_LIFE_BROCHURE.pdf

From: Conference Report: "Beyond the Brain VIII: Self and Death - What Survives?" by Lew Sutton, *SPR Paranormal Review* January 2010, Issue 53

TASTE

Dr. Charles Tart reports that over the years he has had hundreds of fellow scientists from all sorts of fields quietly come up to him at meetings to tell him about their unusual experiences apparently going beyond everyday reality and challenging their concepts of what the world is. Because of this Dr. Tart created The Archives of Scientists' Transcendent Experiences (TASTE), an online journal devoted to transcendent experiences that scientists have reported. It lets scientists express these experiences in a safe space, collects and shares them to debunk the stereotype that "real" scientists don't have "spiritual" or "mystical" or "psychic" experiences, and builds a database of these experiences for future research. You can read about their experiences at issc-taste.org/arc/dbo.cgi?set=arc&ss=1.

End of Life Experiences (ELE) Survey

An ELE survey conducted by Dr. Peter Fenwick found that 90% of those working in hospices and hospitals had heard of patients' visions of departed loved ones gathering as if to help their transition. Dr. Fenwick says that these visions were quite distinct from ordinary hallucinations which were vague and incoherent. Deathbed coincidences such as knowing that someone has died were experienced by 40% of respondents. Reports of clocks stopping were also common. There were reports of alarms going off at the time of death. Dr. Fenwick reports that the traditional accounts of seeing light or mist leaving the body at the time of death were rare, although caregivers described the near death time as a "spiritual time."

From: Conference Report: "Beyond the Brain VIII: Self and Death - What Survives?" by Lew Sutton, *SPR Paranormal Review*, January 2010, Issue 53

The Scientific and Medical Network was started in Britain (scimednet.org) by scientists who felt the materialist view was limiting science. Their mission is to "explore and expand the frontiers of science, medicine and spirituality" There aims are: "To provide a safe forum for the critical and open-minded discussion of ideas that go beyond conventional paradigms in science, medicine and philosophy, to integrate intuitive insights with rational analysis in our investigations, to encourage a respect for Earth and community which emphasizes a spiritual and holistic approach and to challenge the adequacy of 'scientific materialism' as an exclusive basis for knowledge and values."

EVP Interpretation

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Some of the EVP not only had 0% agreement, but the various interpretations sometimes differed wildly. For example, one EVP that had no agreement on any words across raters was interpreted as saying, among other things: "Deep inside there's a pickup;" "Keep those hidden Mr. Gel;" "He comes out here;" "Go outside and just lean on it;" "Get it tight, got to stretch it;" "Don't try to persuade them;" "Get us out Mr. Kant;" and "I need the guns out if this is what you'll do." These various interpretations do not even contain similar phonemes.

Incidentally, the percentage of agreement with the consensual interpretation can be used as a way of assessing the clarity of an EVP. Historically, investigators have classified EVP as Class A, B, or C depending on how easily listeners can hear a message. But calculating the percentage of people who independently agree with the most common interpretation is a more precise and unambiguous indicator of the quality and clarity of an EVP than classifying it into one of three categories. Every EVP would have a score from 0 (no consensus; this EVP cannot be interpreted) to 100 (complete consensus; this EVP is so clear that everyone hears exactly the same thing).

Emotional Content

Raters indicated whether they detected any emotion in the voice. The majority of the EVP (63.5%) had no discernible emotional tone. However, raters indicated that some EVP expressed sadness (9.7%), anger or irritability (8.2%), urgency (7.7%), or happiness (6.3%).

Setting aside the fact that most of the EVP had no emotional tone, when an emotion was detected, on average only 12.7% of the raters agreed that a particular emotion, such as anger or sadness, was present. Thus, raters showed even less agreement in detecting emotion than in interpreting the content of the EVP.

Interestingly, raters' tendency to hear emotions in the EVP was related to their own personalities. For example, raters who scored higher on the measure of extraversion reported "happiness" in the voices more frequently, raters who scored higher on the measure of agreeableness reported hearing both more "happiness" and more "anger," and those who scored higher on emotional stability heard more "happiness" expressed. Raters' interpretations of emotional tone sometimes reflected their own personalities as much as the actual features of the EVP.

Rater Confidence

For each EVP, raters indicated how confident they were that their interpretation was correct on a 4-point scale (where 1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, and 4 = very confident). Across all EVP, raters' confidence averaged between "a little" and "moderately" confident (average confidence was 2.5 on the 4-point scale). To see if raters

who were more confident of their interpretations were more likely to hear what other raters heard (the consensus interpretation), I correlated raters' confidence judgments with the number of their interpretations that agreed with the group's consensus interpretation. The correlation was rather weak, indicating that being confident that one's interpretation is correct does not usually reflect that other people will hear the same thing.

Differences among Raters

I calculated an index of personal agreement that tells us how good each rater was at hearing the most common interpretation. Individual raters agreed with the group consensus between 17% and 35% of the time, with an average of 22%. That is, the "best" rater agreed with the group consensus interpretations on 35% of the EVP, and the "worst" rater agreed on 17% of the EVP. When analyzed at the level of the word rather than the entire EVP, the percent of raters who agreed with the group consensus varied from 31% to 51%, with an average of 38% of the words. So, if we play the average EVP to a large group of people, the average person will agree with the consensus interpretation of the entire EVP 22% of the time but agree with 38% of the words.

I analyzed whether any of the characteristics of the raters mattered in their agreement with the consensus interpretation. Although we might expect that experience with EVP might be related to interpretation ability, the degree to which raters agreed with the consensus interpretation was not related to the number of EVP that they had personally recorded, their years of involvement in paranormal investigations, the number or content of paranormal television shows they watched, basic personality dimensions, their age, or the nature of their beliefs in the paranormal. The only variable that was significantly related to agreement with the consensus interpretation was gender. Women's interpretations agreed with the consensus interpretation 4% more often than men's interpretations (24% vs. 20%). I'm not sure what to make of this finding.

Most raters' interpretations were meaningful phrases, but some gave phonetic interpretations even if they did not make semantic sense. For example, on one EVP for which there was no consensus, some raters gave meaningful interpretations (such as "Hey we sung in the chorus" or "That is so great, Cory"), whereas other raters wrote down what they heard even though it didn't make sense (such as "Hack me some green course" and "Hey peace and grin Coreys"). Investigators should consider whether imposing meaning on an EVP may lead them to "hear" words that help the phrase make sense but that might be incorrect.

The raters also differed in their willingness to leave blanks. Raters were told to use an asterisk when they couldn't interpret a particular word. Some raters used asterisks regularly,

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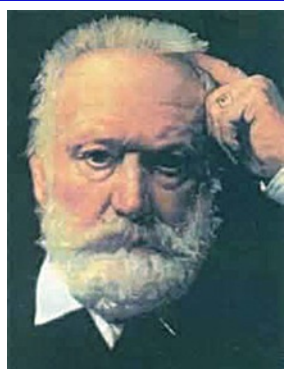
Do Famous “Dead” People Communicate?

by Michael Tymn

I believe in spirits and spirit communication through mediums. What I struggle with, however, is communication purportedly coming from famous people or more current celebrities of one kind or another. I am highly skeptical when the spirit communicator claims to be Jesus, St. Michael, Socrates, Plato, St. Augustine or some other historical figure held in high regard by many.

Then again, I wonder if I am being too hasty in dismissing such communicators. Why wouldn't they communicate? If the unknowns of the spirit world can communicate, why shouldn't those well-known in their earth lives come through now and then as well? If we are to believe that Jesus was concerned with the welfare of humankind when alive, why wouldn't he still be concerned and continue with his teachings? Of course, the religious skeptic would say that if Jesus wanted to communicate he would certainly be able to do a much better job and be more convincing than he has been in those cases in which he has supposedly communicated in recent years. But the student of mediumship comes to understand that inter-dimensional communication has many obstacles and that the obstacles for superior spirits are greater than those facing lower spirits.

If the seemingly credible spirits can be believed, the superior spirits have a much more difficult time communicating than those at lower levels because they are existing at such a high rate of vibration relative to the earth vibration. These superior spirits, we are told, have to use spirits at lower levels of vibration to relay their messages to humans and these messages are sometimes distorted in the process, especially when they are filtered through the medium's mind.



Victor Hugo

During the early 1850s, Victor Hugo, the renowned French author, was supposedly receiving messages from Socrates, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Martin Luther, Galileo and others. One communicating spirit identified “itself” to Hugo as “Death,” another as “Angel of Light” and still another as the “Shadow of the Sepulcher.” It was the “Shadow” who first

communicated by means of table raps after Léopoldine, Hugo's deceased daughter, came through, informing Hugo and the others sitting in a circle with the medium that “death is the balloon that takes the soul to heaven,” “infinity is an emptiness packed full” and “use your body to search out your soul.” Initially, Hugo was very skeptical, wondering if the table acted through their thoughts.

Although he soon came to believe that spirits of the dead

were communicating, he then wondered if these were devious spirits posing as wise men, as religious leaders claimed, especially when what they had to say conflicted with established dogma and doctrine. But Hugo apparently had also heard that the “essence” of advanced souls can come down through lower spirits and that “group souls” can take on a fictitious identity for want of a specific identity. Whatever the explanation, Hugo was intrigued, impressed and inspired by much of what the superior spirits had to say.

During the 1870s, William Stainton Moses, an Anglican priest, was said to be controlled by a band of 49 spirits under the direction of a spirit called Imperator. Some of



William Stainton Moses

Imperator's subordinates had names like Rector, Mentor, and Doctor. Apparently, Imperator was too far advanced and had to relay messages through some of the 49 who were closer in vibration to the earth vibration. When Imperator was asked about his name and the other strange names in his band of 49 spirits, he replied:

“These names are but convenient symbols for influences brought to bear upon you. In some cases the influence is not centralized; it is impersonal, as you would say.

In many cases, the messages given you are not the product of any one mind, but are the collective influence of a number. Many who have been concerned with you are but the vehicles to you of a yet higher influence which is obliged to reach you in that way. We deliberate, we consult and in many instances you receive the impression of our united thought.”

Allan Kardec, the pioneering French researcher, purportedly received messages from John the Evangelist, St. Augustine, St. Vincent De Paul, St. Louis, “The Spirit of Truth,” Socrates, Plato, Fénelon, Franklin and Swedenborg. They answered questions on every conceivable subject, including God, pantheism, universal space, biblical accounts of creation, reincarnation, relationships beyond the grave, possession, the fate of children beyond the grave, spirit influence, war, capital punishment, slavery, dreams, free will, suicide and fear of death, to name just some.

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Famous "Dead" People Continued from page 13

A few years before Hugo and Kardec began their investigations of mediumship, John Edmonds, Chief Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, and George T. Dexter, a New York physician, received numerous profound messages from Swedenborg, the brilliant 18th century scientist, and Lord Francis Bacon, the 17th century British philosopher.

As Kardec came to understand, superior spirits, while preserving their individuality, have no need to be identified with their teachings delivered while on earth, but because humans seem to need an identity in order to fix their ideas, superior spirits who identify with the teachings of the famous personage and belong to the same "family" or "collective whole" may take that famous name to appease us, as it is the teaching, not the signature, that is important.

"In proportion as spirits are purified and elevated in the hierarchy, the distinctive characters of their personalities are, in some sort, obliterated in the uniformity of perfection, and yet they do not the less preserve their individuality: this is the case with the superior and pure spirits," Kardec related what he had come to understand. "In this condition, the name they had on earth, in one of their thousand ephemeral corporeal existences, is quite an insignificant thing. Let us remark again that spirits are attracted to each other by the similarity of their qualities, and that they thus form sympathetic groups or families ... but as names are necessary to us to fix our ideas, they can take that of any known personage whose nature is best identified with their own.... It thus follows that if a person's guardian angel gives his name as St. Peter, for instance, there is no actual proof that it is the apostle of that name; it may be he, or it may be an entirely unknown spirit belonging to the family of spirits of which St. Peter makes a part; it also follows that under whatever name the guardian angel is invoked, he comes to the call that is made because he is attracted by the thought and the name is indifferent to him."

Kardec asked if taking the name of a famous person would not be fraud. "It would be fraud on the part of a bad spirit who might want to deceive," came the answer, "but when it is for good, God permits it to be so among spirits of the same order, because there is among them a solidarity and similarity of thought."

Kardec had earlier been warned that inferior spirits frequently borrow respectable names in order to give credence to their words. Moreover, some spirits report



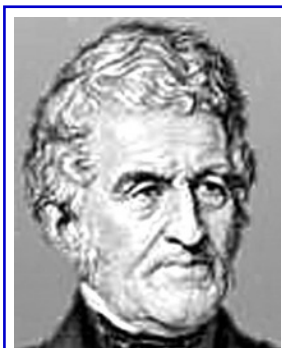
Allan Kardec

themselves as fictional characters. "There is always a crowd of spirits ready to speak for anything," Kardec wrote, mentioning that one day a person took a fancy to invoke Tartufe, a fictitious character from a French play. Tartufe came immediately and talked of Orgon, of Elmire, of Damis, and of Valire, other fictitious characters in the play. "As to himself, he counterfeited the hypocrite with as much art as if Tartufe had been a real personage. Afterward, he said he was the spirit of an actor who had played that character."

The superior spirits, Kardec was informed, "have a language always worthy, noble, elevated, with not the least tincture of triviality. They say everything with simplicity and modesty, never boast, never make a parade of their knowledge or their position among others. That of the inferior or ordinary spirit has always some reflex human passion; every expression that savors of vulgarity, self-sufficiency, arrogance, boasting, acrimony, is a characteristic indication of inferiority or of treachery if the spirit presents himself under a respected and venerated name."

Kardec asked why inferior spirits were permitted to interfere in the first place. Couldn't God or the superior spirits prevent it? "God permits it to be so to make trial of your perseverance and your judgment, and to teach you to distinguish truth from error; if you do not, it is that you are not sufficiently elevated, and still need the lessons of experience," came the reply.

Robert Hare, a distinguished professor of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania and one of the pioneers of psychical research, began his investigations assuming that he would debunk mediums, but after several months of investigation he became a believer and began recording messages from spirits. He asked them what the various mediumship phenomena were



Robert Hare

all about and was told that they were "a deliberate effort on the part of the inhabitants of the higher spheres to break through the partition which has interfered with the attainment, by mortals, of a correct idea of their destiny after death." To carry out this intention, he was told, a delegation of advanced spirits has been appointed. He was further informed that lower spirits were allowed to take part in the undertaking because they were better able to make mechanical movements and loud rappings than those on the higher realms.

Imperator told Stainton Moses that they (the superior spirits) overestimated their ability to communicate. "It is true that Benjamin Franklin did discover means of communication by raps, and that he was greatly aided by Swedenborg in awakening

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EVP Interpretation

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but others did not use them at all. Given that we can assume that no rater was perfectly confident of every word, those who interpreted words they didn't understand probably made more misleading interpretations than those who admitted that they didn't understand certain words.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The results of this study suggest that investigators should be less confident in their interpretations of EVP than they typically are. On average, the most common interpretation of each EVP was shared by only 22% of other people. And, of course, all interpretations other than the most common, consensual one had even less agreement. In fact, most of the raters' interpretations were not given by any other listener! Furthermore, raters were not particularly good at judging the correctness of their interpretations. Thus, having the sense that "I'm sure this is what it says" does not indicate that other people will agree with one's interpretation (or that it is actually correct).

These results lead me to offer four recommendations for the responsible interpretation of EVP:

1. In light of the fact that any particular investigator's interpretation of an EVP is not likely to be shared by other people and that people's interpretations are biased by what they expect to hear, investigators should never interpret an EVP for other people without playing it for them several times and soliciting their independent interpretations.
2. If the interpretation of a specific EVP is particularly important (such as when it is being interpreted for grieving family members), investigators should use a scaled-down version of the procedure used in this study. Have at least 10 people independently listen to the EVP and determine the consensus interpretation, if any. Then report an interpretation of the EVP to others only if a majority of listeners agrees on that interpretation. In some cases, it may be helpful to report more than one potential interpretation, along with the percentage of people who agreed with each one. Providing listeners with such data is a more honest and responsible way to share EVP than to offer a particular interpretation that might, in fact, be idiosyncratic.
3. Investigators should be willing to refrain from interpreting ambiguous EVP. Providing a questionable interpretation as if it is certain is misleading, if not sometimes dishonest. Just because an EVP cannot be interpreted does not mean it is not a useful piece of evidence, so investigators should not interpret EVP that are unclear.
4. Paranormal investigation groups and EVP practitioners should have formal guidelines for the interpretation of EVP that minimize the likelihood that they will offer

interpretations of EVP—whether to other group members, clients, or outsiders—that are expressed with greater confidence than the objective evidence warrants. Investigators should exercise greater care in sharing their interpretations of EVP, and procedures should be in place to ensure that clients, other investigators and the public are not inadvertently misled regarding interpretations of an EVP.

With a Ph. D. in social psychology, Dr. Leary is a research psychologist who studies topics related to self-awareness, motivation, and emotion. He has conducted research on topics such as reactions to social rejection, the effects of excessive self-attention, people's concerns with their social images, and the relationship between personality and behavior. He is on the editorial boards of several scientific journals in social psychology and recently released a psychology course on DVD entitled "Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior."



Editor: This is the first of three articles by Mark resulting from his study of EVP. The Spring issue of the ATransC NewsJournal will include his second article titled "A Study of Radio Sweep EVP." For an additional study of how people hear EVP, please refer to the article "EVP Online Listening Trials" in the ATransC online Journal at atransc.org/journal/online_listening_trials.htm

Viewpoint

Continued from page 1

There does seem to be hope that more people can speak more freely about their experiences and communication with their loved ones. But those of us who believe in spirit communication through electronic devices are still considered on the fringe of the fringe. As most of you have come to learn, we are a dedicated, special bunch; few in number but determined that the fact of personal survival will become commonly accepted.

All we can say is that we count ourselves as lucky; lucky to have the knowledge that we do survive death, that we can communicate with our loved ones through EVP and ITC and lucky to know people like you. May you be blessed in the coming year with messages and signs from your loved ones letting you know that death is not the end.

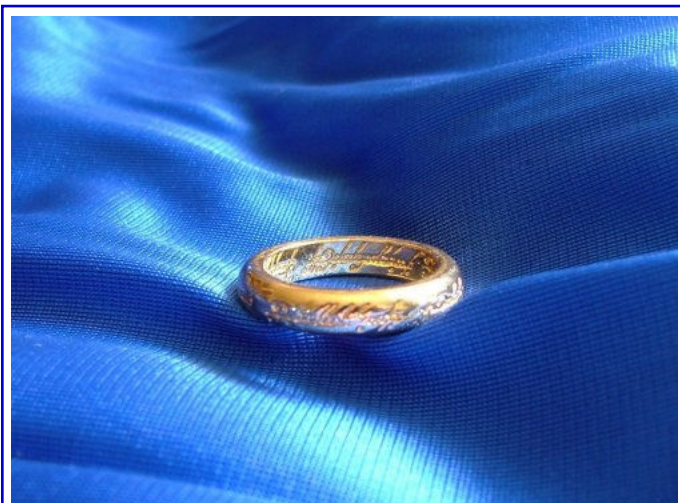
UPDATE! We have just learned that Steve's son Alex has been able to get through via text message. This first weekend of December, Steve's ex-wife had some old text messages from Alex show up on her phone. When she tried to save them they were gone. Then Steve's 19-year-old daughter received two texts from Alex the next day. They were dated the day after Alex's transition. One said "**Miss you, Sister.**" The other one said "**Love you.**" and used a nickname that only he would call her. Steve disconnected Alex's phone several weeks ago. Yeah! Tom and Lisa

JOTTs Update

by Lisa Butler

"Thinking of You" by Allison Sniffin on page 3 is about a missing part for her musical equipment that just suddenly reappeared. That kind of experience is called a JOTT or "Just One of Those Things." We have received two more interesting stories about personal experiences with JOTTS.

One person told us a story about her brother. He had been wearing his father's ring since his father's transition. He was driving to work with his hand out of the window when the ring fell off. Naturally, he was really upset and felt sick about losing it; however, several days later he was climbing into bed when he spotted the ring sitting on his bed.



One Ring by SuziJane

[flickr.com/photos/suzijane/6401439/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/suzijane/6401439/)

The other story is from a man who told us about his wife losing a gold ring. She was certain that it had been in her jewelry box, but it was nowhere to be found. They searched the house before being forced to give up and declare it lost. About a year later, the ring turned up once again in the jewelry box but it was badly bent, as if Uri Geller had gotten ahold of it.

As a reminder, here is a little information on the story we ran about a year ago. In 2004, I read an article in the *Paranormal Review* (a publication of the Society for Psychical Research) by Nicola Holt that I found quite interesting.³ Holt's article was about *jottles*.

A jottle is described as a general term for discontinuities with time and space. A jottle has become known as a JOTT or "Just One of Those Things," because episodes in which things disappear or turn up in the wrong place are usually written off rather than examined. Could one of parapsychology's most bizarre, least understood and least researched phenomena also be among the most common?²

In *Broken Threads In the Fabric of Physical Reality*,⁴ Mary Rose Barrington writes, "In serious language, JOTT is a

spatial discontinuity, and put like that, it is a major anomaly because there shouldn't be any spatial discontinuities..."

Nicola Holt describes six variants of jottle that have been identified³:

1. **Walkabout:** "The basic jottle, where an object disappears from a known location and reappears in a new location.
2. **Comeback:** "An object disappears and later reappears in the same place."
3. **Flyaway:** "The object disappears and never comes back."
4. **Turn-up:** "An object appears in a location where it couldn't have been before."
5. **Windfall:** "An object appears that has never been seen before."
6. **Trade-In:** "An object disappears, and is replaced with a similar object."

References

1. "The Transhumanation Hypothesis" by Michael A. Thalbourne psychognosis.net/cgi-bin/default.pl?page=viewdoc&doc=thalb1&group=3
2. Jottles reflight.blogspot.com/2010/06/jottles.html
3. *Paranormal Review* April 2004
4. *Broken Threads In the Fabric of Physical Reality* by Mary Rose Barrington, *Paranormal Review*, October 2009.

Famous "Dead" People Continued from page 14
interest among spirits in the subject," Imperator communicated. "At the time of the discovery it was believed that all denizens of both worlds would be brought into ready communion. But, both on account of the obstinate ignorance of man, and of the extent to which the privilege was abused by spirits who assumed well-known names and personated them and so deceived men, that privilege has been greatly narrowed."

Those who wonder why the mediumship of old was so much more dynamic and offered so much more wisdom than that of today may want to ponder Imperator's words.



Michael Tymn's books, *The Afterlife Revealed: What Happens After We Die* and *Transcending the Titanic: Beyond Death's Door*, are published by White Crow Books and are available from Amazon and all good online book stores. See Michael's blog at

whitecrowbooks.com/michaeltymn/





Silver Fox Circle - Update

In the Winter 2012 *ATransC NewsJournal*, we ran an article about our wonderful October 2011 visit with the Silver Fox Circle and cabinet medium Fay Wright in Newcastle, England. To remind you, the Silver Fox Circle's communicators are mostly children. The séance room is full of toys with which the children "train" to develop their skills.



Silver Fox Circle, left to right in the back row: Fay, Jenny and Margaret; front row: Anna, Joan and Val

Fay recently wrote us with an update and we want to report that their spirit team is working on materialization. Fay said that the spirit people have worked very hard and are now taking solid form in the cabinet. They have succeeded in materializing outside the cabinet a few times, which is great progress.

Fay wrote, "Joan lost her daughter a few weeks ago and she was asked to come to the curtain on the cabinet with her back against the curtain. She felt a solid form lean fully into her." She was told that it was her daughter!

Another member, Anna, lost her dad in October, and in a recent sitting only twenty-five days from his passing, he firmly took her by the arm and placed his hand into hers. She said it was a large hand that was very solid and real. Fay said that they all cried buckets talking about it. She also reported that Michael, one of their special spirit children, has managed to pass matter through matter by placing a pea inside a balloon that Val was holding near the curtain.

Fay's email continued, "They are doing what they said they would be doing, using the ectoplasm close to the cabinet. Michael has told us he now can form his fingers in ectoplasm and has been showing us in some great ways his newfound 'magic' as he calls it; he's so funny. He had two of the girls holding the bottom of the curtain tonight as he then proceeded to pull the curtain from their grasp! Heaven knows what he will come up with next.

"We are all thrilled, of course, and I'm finding it a bit mind blowing. It's so true when they say even when it's quiet they are working away as we have had a few weeks with nothing then away they go again and it's so exciting and makes you feel so humble at the same time."

Resolution of Grief

Continued from page 7

"For all you've done: Blessings to you for creating sacred space for me to connect with my mother! It is a gift I will be forever grateful for receiving."

"Rochelle, I have become a powerful and self-assured woman."

Conclusions

The Guided Afterlife Connections procedure dramatically reduces the disturbance of memories that initially were very upsetting. The SUDS ratings decreased from a pre-session average score of 8.5 or 10.71 (depending on the scores assigned to ratings above 10) to a mid- and post-session average rating of 1.42. All of the Guided Afterlife Connections in the study resulted in connections in one session. It is clear that the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure has a dramatic effect on grief with virtually all clients, regardless of the level of grief at the beginning of the session.

Since evaluations of conventional grief therapy show it has little or no effect on clients' grief, the highly effective Guided Afterlife Connections procedure should be used as the standard treatment for people suffering from bereavement over the passing of a loved one.

Endnotes

This article is a condensed version of the original at newsletter.guidedafterlifeconnections.com/SUDS_Article.htm

1. Jordan, J. & Neimeyer, R. (2003). "Does grief counseling work?" *Death Studies*, 27, 765-786.
2. Currier, J., & Neimeyer, R. (2008). "The Effectiveness of Psychotherapeutic Interventions for the Bereaved: A Comprehensive Quantitative Review." Presented at the 30th annual *Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) Conference* in Montreal, Canada, April 30-May 3, 2008.
3. Garcia-Garcia J., Landa Patralanda V., Grandes Odriozola G., Mauriz Etxabe A., Andollo Hervás I. (2005). "A Randomized Controlled Bereavement Intervention Study in Primary Care: Preliminary Results." Presented at the 7th *International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society*, Kings College, London, July 12-15, 2005.
4. Nowatzki, N., & Kalischuk, R. (2009). "Post-Death Encounters: Grieving, Mourning, and Healing." *OMEGA Journal of Death and Dying*, 59(2), 91-111.



R. Craig Hogan, Ph.D., a writer and trainer of writers with thirty-eight years' experience. He is director of the Center for Spiritual Understanding and on the boards of the Academy of Spiritual and Paranormal Studies and Association for Evaluation and Communication of Evidence for Survival.

See: youreternalself.com

The Collective

ATransC is sponsoring a new forum intended to permit subject-matter specialists to produce educational articles for the public. Best practices, such as "Using a control recorder for EVP" in the Best Practices section of ATransC.org, will be featured, but all subjects will be addressed as editors are available to develop articles.

Best practices are based on a consensus of collaborating subject-matter specialists. They are not rules and should evolve with new understanding. The idea is to help people avoid making the same old beginner mistakes. It is important to note that practices belong to the community.

The Collective is at ATransC.org/bp/. Editors must be an ATransC member; however, reciprocal rights are offered to active members of other organizations. Experience has shown that the commitment of membership signals a person who is truly interested in these phenomena. It is ATransC members who have made the over 400 pages on ATransC.org possible. Thanks to you, hundreds of people visit the website every day, so this new project will give members yet another way to help the public.

Take a look at the forum and let us know if you are interested in participating. Keeping in mind the membership requirement, we are inviting people from around the larger community to participate. If you know of anyone who has experience in ITC, mediumship, hauntings investigations and psi functioning, and is the kind of person who will work with others to develop a document, then please feel free to tell them about the project.

Notice to All Who Accept the Afterlife

from Victor Zammit

There are a number of television and radio interviewers using the word "believers" for those who accept the afterlife. Tell these interviewers, the journalists and radio interviewers and those others who are still yet uninformed about using the correct terminology that we are NOT believers! We ACCEPT the afterlife evidence. There is a huge difference between "believing" and "accepting the evidence." Beliefs do NOT amount to proof of anything and any belief could be wrong, because anything "subjective" is subject to complete invalidation. But accepting the repeatable evidence for the afterlife has NEVER been rebutted by any genius-materialist-closed-minded skeptic, or anybody else. So keep it in mind always: we ACCEPT the EVIDENCE; we do NOT just "believe" because we have irrefutable proof for the afterlife. By labeling you a "believer" the interviewer or the skeptic is putting you in a weak position, is lowering your status to equal you with those who "believe" in fantasies.

From: Victor Zammit, October 12th 2012 Friday Afterlife Report, victorzammit.com/week6bless/

IPATI Listening Team

Continued from page 5

For example, we learned that the frequency of responses before the question appears to be too high. How can this be? It might be statistically acceptable if there were just a few responses prior to questions, but here we see that almost half came before. At the very least, this information will reinforce the understanding that the responses are more than just chance.

It is through these studies, which are only possible thanks to the cooperation of many volunteers, that we can improve our work.

Brazilian researcher Sonia Rinaldi is the founder and coordinator of IPATI and is one of the world's most progressive ITC researchers.

The IPATI website is at ipati.org.



[Editor's Note: The IPATI listening team is the most sophisticated application of a listening panel we are aware of. Listening panels are currently the most reliable tool for assessing the content of the messages in EVP. Individual listeners may mistake the normal as paranormal, but if several people agree on the content of an example without prior knowledge of one another's work and what the practitioner felt was said, then researchers have reason to accept the objectivity of the utterance.

Much remains to be understood about the way people hear and understand mostly indeterminate voices (Class B and C). We agree that the IPATI listening team approach has the potential of increasing our understanding.]

The ASPSI is now the ASCSI

The Academy of Spirituality and Paranormal Studies has changed their name to the Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies, Inc. (ASCSI). The Academy was founded in 1972 as the academic affiliate of the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship. They publish two scholarly quarterlies, *The Journal for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies*



and a newsletter, *The Searchlight*. Both deal with religion, psychical research and related topics. Please visit the Academy's website at ascsi.org.



Researchers' Reports

Please remember to send your EVP/ITC results and experiences to Lisa at atranscom@aol.com

Tom and Lisa Butler: We recorded several EVP during Big Circle recording sessions over the past few months. Tom recorded a clear **"Big Circle"** on his recorder after we asked for those from the Big Circle. We also recorded the names **"Kathy," "Karen"** and **"Melvin."** A dear best friend recently transitioned and we attended her memorial in Phoenix, after which Lisa recorded her voice saying **"Lisa"** as well as a few words with her Minnesota accent. Lisa has heard from her each recording session since. Our friend seems to be improving in her ability to get through.

Ken Chris wrote "My dear wife, whom I am still deeply in love with, passed to spirit last year, with cancer. Since then I have been communicating with her by EVP using a digital voice recorder. I am now receiving some good Class A voices from her but still a lot of Class B Cs I am using Audacity, but probably not as efficient as I should be."



Phyllis Delduque has updated her website with new video-loop ITC images. Here is one of them:

Her web address is transcomunicacaotci.yolasite.com/

Margaret Downey wrote that she recorded several names that she did not recognize on Big Circle night. They were all recorded via manual AM radio-sweep as background. Some of the EVP she recorded are **"Somebody mentioned the Big Circle," "Hey Tommy, I'm talking," "It's Chris and Skye"** and **"Hey Day it's Jim."** After she asked her friend's son to say something for his mom, she recorded, **"Hey Mom it's me, you hear me?"**

Ernesto H wrote: "I just wanted to inform you that I'm having great EVP communication with my loved one. Some great EVP in which I recognize his voice (I'm using EVP-maker). He told me about my birthday, Christmas and New Year. He tells me what I'm doing. He even told me **"Pico, I'm looking at you!"** He called me Pico; that was the nickname he gave me. Well, two actually; Pico and Puko, LOL. When he talks to me via EVP he calls me by both names and messages are always bilingual (English and Spanish), which is typical in Miami. Here is my birthday EVP:

"I asked: 'Estas conmigo papi?' (Are you with me, Papi?)

"He responded: **'Si!'** (Yes)

"I asked: 'Que dia es hoy?' (What day is today?)

"He responded: **'Your Birthday.'**

"I said: 'I love you!'

"He responded: **'I Love you too!'"**

Alison Kirkbride wrote that they had gone to Woolsthorpe Manor, the home of Sir Isaac Newton. She wrote, "We were told that a large black cat has taken up residence in the house which is now owned by the National Trust. The cat is called Cocoa and is allowed to roam freely around the house. He even sleeps on the beds, especially the one which belonged to Isaac Newton.

"We had our digital recorders turned on whilst we were walking around the house, including in the bedroom where the cat was lying on the bed. When I reviewed the recordings I was amused to find: **"You should be off of here"** (probably someone admonishing the cat). Intrigued, I researched to see if Newton did own a cat and found that apparently, yes. Newton did love cats and is in fact credited for inventing the cat flap! No wonder Cocoa has settled down there, and how brilliant that the National Trust allows him to stay and even lets him sleep on the beds!"

Tom Lorton shared EVP captured utilizing radio-sweep, switching between AM and FM while using a Panasonic RR-DR60 to record. He wrote, "They seemed to be waiting for the radio to be turned on. I have one EVP that said, **'Play it.'** Last week, I had one say, **'He doesn't know how to tune it,'** followed by, **'That's better,'** as it scanned. Some are aware of how I was using the radio."

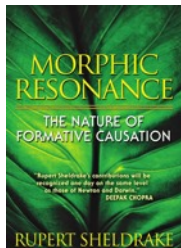
Jutta Liebman wrote: "I have received good results with a Spiritbox P-SB7. In some experiments I received prompt, very clear answers to my questions from the entities. However, this device is not suitable for beginners with Instrumental TransCommunication. Stefan Bion is actually trying to build a new device on the basis of the Skype-recording method. He has already spent about 500 EUR for components. A VTF member, who is medium, has given him some hints for the new device. Up to now, I have not received any further news about his progress."

Allison Sniffen reported that she was at her mother's house when the phone rang. She posted in the Idea Exchnage, "I was right next to it. I didn't have my IC recorder ready so it was fortunate the call went to the answering machine. The number on the caller ID was unfamiliar." In the recording she posted, she said she hears a distorted version of her mother's voice saying **"home,"** a man saying **"This is perfect,"** followed with her mom saying **"Allison"** and a different voice saying **"I love you."** On another recording, **"It's your mom,"** was recorded during a hang up on the answering machine."

Book Review

Morphic Resonance: The Nature of Formative Causation

By Rupert Sheldrake



It is not known what causes a cell to differentiate into specific parts of a body such as skin, bone and muscle. Rupert Sheldrake argues in his "Hypothesis of Formative Causation" that cell division is guided by "morphic fields" that maintain an image of how the cells have always divided to produce the required parts of the body. In his theory, there are morphic fields for everything. For instance, skin cell morphic fields are directed by an organizing morphic field for the whole body to produce the right kind of cell in the right place.

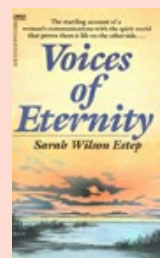
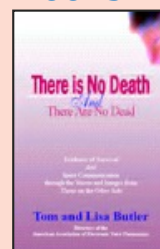
"Morphic" means having a particular form, and a morphic field is formed based on existing forms. They are sometimes described as representing nature's habits; however, an important aspect of morphic fields is that new behavior learned by one organism can influence morphic fields of the same kind no matter where they are. For instance, a difficult formulation of a crystal which is developed in one location has been seen to result in a much easier formulation of the same crystal in other locations. In fact, a way of studying the hypothesis is to look for ways that previously difficult processes have inexplicably become easier.

The hypothesis applies to thought forms and processes, as well. For instance, as communicators on both sides of the veil get better at working with transcommunication, it should become easier for further transcommunication.

Morphic fields evolve as the organism adopts new behavior, but the interesting part of this hypothesis is that some form of consciousness is responsible for the changes that eventually result in changes to the field. This is an important point for people studying transcommunication, because according to the Hypothesis of Formative Causation, the same factors involved in working with things paranormal are involved in evolution.

This book is an easy-to-read explanation of a very important concept for the study of transcommunication. While it is written mostly from the perspective of cell formation, Sheldrake does address how the fields might also apply to such conceptual things as social behavior and even inanimate objects. It is highly recommended for people who like studying metaphysics. (Be sure to use the Amazon link at ATransC.org.) ISBN-13: 978-1-59477-317-4, Park Street Press, 2009

Books



Access books recommended by ATransC at atransc.org/resources/books.htm.

Association TransCommunication Membership Form

You can also use the online form at http://atransc.org/online_membership_form.htm



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