

The *Rashomon* aspect of Fossey's life can be seen by looking at the two books I haven't mentioned yet. Mowat is quite sympathetic to Fossey while Fossey's book is, in Hayes' view, not very reliable history. As a personality, she exemplifies the cliché that truth by a goodly margin is stranger than fiction. Becky concluded her report in this manner:

Dian was an interesting person to learn about. She didn't demonstrate a lot of science, but then I learned what kind of science was right and wrong. Her character was a weird one to write about. She seemed to go a little mad at times and have a strong temper. By doing this 'research a scientist' project, I learned that science isn't always doing research in a laboratory, which is what most people believe.

Well, as much as I enjoyed bonding with my daughter, maybe most people don't believe that a laboratory is the only place a research scientist inhabits. Observation, however, while a legitimate endeavor, is a far cry from a controlled experiment; perhaps scientists and science writers ought to make this distinction clearer and more frequently in order that the general public understands that different techniques are employed resulting in different expectations. Fossey made an extraordinary number of contacts with the gorillas but in the end, science made little, if any, progress because while she was emotionally committed to the animals, she just wasn't very scientific in the boring, conventional sense of keeping good data. The photographs made for good cinema and not much else.

Quite coincidentally, while Becky and I were immersed in Dian Fossey's life, Jane Goodall came to town to give a public lecture to raise funds for her work. Montgomery's book devotes equal time to each of the three women and to my dismay, Goodall was repeating to a packed audience, as if they were fresh insights, the very same stories that appear in this 1991 publication. By now, one would hope for new primate revelations but theater is more appealing to a lay audience than the dull, everyday work of science. There is, to be sure, more than one scientific method, but the Mann-Whitney U-test just doesn't sell very well.

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Women and Parapsychology by Lisette Coly and Thea A. White, Ed. New York: Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., 1994.

In 1991, the Parapsychology Foundation celebrated its 40th Anniversary in Dublin, Ireland, with a conference devoted to "Women and Parapsychology." At that time a notable group of women and men gathered to discuss the relationship of science to the field of parapsychology and how feminist thinking can benefit parapsychology. While men attended the conference, only women presented papers. Topics ranged from "The Relevance to Parapsychology of a

Feminist Approach to Science" to "Behind the Veil: Muslim Women's Contributions to Parapsychology" to "Are Women more Sheepish?: Gender Differences in Belief in the Paranormal." Among the presenters were Rhea A. White, Beverly Rubik, and Marilyn Schlitz. Judging from the text of the group discussions following each offering, it was a lively time with divergent opinions expressed.

Generally, the conference attendees agreed that the way women view the world does not necessarily mirror how scientists have studied the world, and parapsychology in particular. In almost every case, these women in parapsychology are asking that science recognize not only the established formulas of scientific research, but a more holistic approach that incorporates feeling and the observer as part of the experiment.

The style of the papers indicates that they are transcriptions or presentations using notes, rather than verbatim reading from written documents. The spontaneous delivery of such clearly planned material provides a very intelligible and lively discourse, which will be, perhaps, especially appealing to a broad spectrum of readers. Yet there is no lack of solid facts, statistics and traditional research techniques. These women in no way intend to undermine the current methodologies, but rather to enhance and expand the criteria of scientific inquiry. The authors' bibliographic references confirm their integrity and their experience as scientific contributors.

As a compendium of the proceedings of a conference, not just position papers themselves, the book includes transcripts of discussions following each dissertation. The interplay between the attendees is revealing and helps to paint a clearer picture of who these women are and what they believe. It is interesting to see several of them defend their theses.

Following Beverly Rubik's "The Feminine Archetype," for instance, Susan Blackmore takes issue with her view of the mind and matter split. Blackmore says, "I think it's quite clear that parapsychology and most of the fringe sciences that you've talked about are based on an assumption of mind and matter being separate." She continues, "I think the whole enterprise of parapsychology is misguided, in that it starts from that separation." Rubik retorts, "I think there is still a fundamental paradox of being separate and yet one. I think that maybe we need to go through that paradox.... And I think if we can begin to hold in our minds the dualism of being separate and yet one and work from that perspective, this will help us recover ourselves in science where we have implicitly cut ourselves off from the research.... Maybe we need to reinvent the method of doing science, because we have separated ourselves from that which we study." While they are not on opposite sides of the issue, they each seem to see it from a different perspective.

Blackmore later defended her paper "Are Women More Sheepish?" Ruth Inge-Heinze saw contradictions in her arguments on wholeness and interconnectedness, while Marilyn Schlitz expressed disappointment in Blackmore's use of survey data, and the cultural framework of the information.

Throughout the conference, discussions assumed a primarily historical, cultural, or cross-cultural position rather than an emphasis on recounting anomalous experiences. The latter are a given. However, a biographic essay on Eileen Garrett, who founded the Parapsychology Foundation in 1951, clearly shows that anomalies can provide stimulus and framework for important academic work. In 1931, Garrett agreed to be scientifically tested by the American Society of Psychical Research, opening a new world to her. Her connection to scientific study continued throughout her life, working with Johns Hopkins and Duke University and Maimonades Hospital, among many others, as a subject, researcher and funder.

In "Women, Power, and the Paranormal: A Cultural Critique" Marilyn Schlitz, says, "Women, whether believers, practitioners, or psychical researchers, are part of an on-going process in which morality, personal relations, and research directions reflect and resist the socially constructed gender categories." Her discussion could easily be applied to other aspects of the feminine experience. Similarly, Jessica Utts in "Past Reflections, Future Prospects" offers two thoughts, "we must be aware of how the expectations of those around us are influencing our behavior, our research ideas, and our modes of thinking..." and "we must learn to distinguish when it matters that we are women and when it does not."

Even from perspectives other than parapsychology such as Transpersonal Psychology or Women's Spirituality, the topics and the content of *Women and Parapsychology* are interesting and relevant. The science of Parapsychology is considered by some to be controversial and outside the mainstream, and as a consequence, research is sparse and funding is a problem. Yet, the issues these women face are parallel to those facing women in other fields and walks of life. In reconnecting, understanding and honoring the feminine in all fields, including parapsychology, a conscious attunement to the wholeness of our life experience may be achieved. *Women in Parapsychology*, though it might have been a dry conference report, succeeds in honoring the feminine in a richly informative discussion of a challenging field.

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Wondrous Events: Foundations of Religious Belief by James McClenon. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994. 281 pp. \$19.95 ISBN 0-8122-1355-6 (pbk.), \$39.95 ISBN 0-8122-3074-4 (cloth).

The author, a sociologist, supposes that most students of religion believe that religions endorse anomalous events within their context and the religious beliefs lead their adherents to credit the anomalous events; "Wondrous stories" (to use his phrase) derive their credibility from the culture in which the narra-