

paralysis. Indeed, for Clancy no abduction hypnotist is aware of these things either. It is the incompetent Svengalis leading the ignorant, already suggestible and vulnerable Trilbys deeper into media fantasies, false memories, and alien abductions. Or if it is not that it is something else equally as explainable.

There are many other problems with Clancy's book, some factual: In 1969, the National Academy of Sciences did not "sponsor a study of all available UFO evidence" (p. 137). John Fuller was not an abduction researcher, etc. (p. 111). More importantly, her book reveals much deeper problems than just factual errors. It displays the deep inadequacies of the academic confrontation with the abduction phenomenon. It is a depressing story of thoughtless assumptions, flawed methodology, and wrong explanations, all based on ignorance and dubious facts. The problems are not unique to Clancy; they are ubiquitous. But, if one has the will to believe that he or she has the solution to the mystery, nothing else matters.

DAVID M. JACOBS
Department of History
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
djacobs@temple.edu

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Proceedings of the 5th Bial Foundation Symposium: *Behind and Beyond the Brain* (5^o Simpósio da Fundação Bial: *Aquém e Além do Cérebro*) by Nuno Grande, Alexandre Castro-Caldas, Dietrich Lehmann Fernando Lopes da Silva, Mário Simões, Robert Morris and Rui Mota Cardoso (orgs.). Porto, Portugal: Fundação Bial, 2004. 301 pp. ISBN 972-99286-0-6.

Bial Foundation is notable for being one of the few institutions in the world which gives financial support to parapsychology research, besides supporting psychophysiology research as well. Every two years, since 1996, the foundation organizes the Bial Foundation Symposium, titled *Behind and Beyond the Brain*, with the purpose of offering to researchers an opportunity to present the results of the researches granted by the foundation, besides counting on thematic lectures. *Proceedings of the 5th Bial Foundation Symposium: Behind and Beyond the Brain* brings the papers and posters presented during the symposium held from March 31st to April 3rd, 2004 in Porto, Portugal, and also includes a list of

the researches supported by Bial Foundation up to 2003. The main subject of the 2004 Symposium was "Consciousness and Brain", a very important and up-to-date question for discussion.

Proceedings is divided into four main sections referring to the four more important moments of the Symposium: (1) "Opening Session"; (2) "Opening Conference"; (3) "Lectures" and (4) "Posters". The section concerning the Opening Session is composed of three speeches (Dr. Luis Portela's, president of Bial Foundation, Prof. Dr. Nuno Grande's, president of the Symposium Organization Committee, and Prof. Dr. Germano de Sousa's, representative of the Order of Medical Doctors) and of a message from the President of the Portugal Republic, which was read by a representative. The presence of those eminent representatives of the Portuguese scientific and political community shows the level of importance and consideration Bial Foundation has in its country.

Dr. Patricia Churchland, a well-known philosopher of the University of California San Diego, was responsible for the Opening Session. In her speech titled "What Is Next for Philosophy?" she defends the hypothesis that brain operations are enough to explain psychological functions so that it is not necessary to postulate the existence of something beyond the brain to explain them. This is a controversial idea that challenges the anti-monist and anti-reductionist conceptions of those researchers who intend to legitimate such conceptions with the empirical results obtained especially in their parapsychological researches.

"Lectures" is a section of *Proceedings* composed of the texts of eleven lectures, all written (and presented) by high level researchers. Here, we will pay attention especially to three of them which we consider the most interesting ones, but we would like to stress that the other ones are also interesting and deserve the readers' attention.

The first text we have chosen to comment on is titled "Introspection Is Alive and Well: Current Methodologies to Study Conscious Experience". It was written and presented by Dr. Etzel Cardeia, nowadays a professor at University of Lund, Sweden. It consists in a panoramic view of various perspectives and methods that can be used in the study of the conscious experiences. These perspectives and methods are based on introspective method. Cardeia defends the utilization of those methods for the study of consciousness, arguing that we can benefit from it, especially when someone wants to understand the experience of being conscious in its various modalities and correlations with other human activities. This kind of methodological discussion is fundamental. In fact, we cannot forget that, aside from the neurophysiological changes, there are alterations in conscious experience which can only be investigated by methods based on introspection. Without recognizing the role of the correlation between these two dimensions, we cannot evaluate consciousness and its complexity accurately.

The second lecture we would like to make some comments on is Dr. Jiri Wackermann's, from the Department of Empirical and Analytical Psychophysics,

Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health (Freiburg, Germany). Titled "Understanding Nature Out of the Continuity Principle: Relations between Experimental Parapsychology and Psychophysics", the text intends to present a methodology that can diminish the methodological and epistemological distance between psychophysics and parapsychology research postulates and methods. The author stresses that it is necessary to adopt a perspective that considers extrasensory perception (or extrasensory information, as it is called in the text), as being an extension or a *continuum* of ordinary perception. This *principle of continuity* could be a basis for a new psychophysics methodology, which would include the study of extrasensory information, an *integral psychophysics*. An example of an experimental study which is described is:

Extrasensory information in visual recognition tasks. In the experiment, visual patterns (alphabetic symbols, geometrical figures, or simple drawings) are displayed in two phases: first, presentation with reduced contrast for a limited duration, followed by an acoustic prompt and the subject's guess; second, presentation with full contrast (black/white) as the feedback. The variable stimulus parameter x is the logarithm of the foreground-to-background brightness ratio, with 0 corresponding to a display of a grey pattern on a grey background of the same brightness. As the contrast is varied, the task is subjectively conceived as an experiment in visual perception, easily understandable and acceptable for the subjects. (pp. 102–103)

We consider this strategy very interesting for diminishing the prejudice of psychophysicists against psi studies. By proposing a modification of the epistemological conception of psi, Wackermann normalizes the field and integrates it to classic fields like psychophysiology.

The third text we would like to comment on was presented by the lecturer Dr. Stephen Kosslyn, from Harvard University. With the title "If Neuroimaging Is the Answer, What Is the Question?", the text announces the complexity of the discussed subject. Traditionally, neurosciences claim the better way to understand mental processes is to correlate mental operations to neuronal modifications in specific localities of the brain. However, Dr. Kosslyn defends the idea that a backstep is fundamental in order to understand the postulates which would be on the basis of the questions made by the researchers who design their studies. The article presents a series of questions related to *how* the information processing happens in the brain, as well as *when* particular processes and structures are invoked. We think that the climax of the article is the discussion about the existence of a unity between the interpretation of the results and the theoretical perspectives adopted. Dr. Kosslyn reminds us that it is necessary not only to find neuronal correlates of human behavior, but also "we must know what questions we are asking and just how far we can go in answering them with these techniques" (p. 154).

As we had said before, still in the "Lectures" section, there are eight other very interesting papers in addition to those we have presented above. Below we present their titles, authors and some brief words about their contents.

"Changes in Conscious Awareness during Spontaneous Self-paced Movement: A Test of the Dynamic Core Hypothesis of Consciousness", written by Adrian Burgess, from the Imperial College London, Faculty of Medicine, Division of Neuroscience & Psychological Medicine, Nicholas Cooper e Petra Vetter, presents an experimental study which tests the Dynamic Core Hypothesis, the Edelman & Tononi's consciousness model for which the authors find support.

Dr. Dick Bierman, in his paper "Non Conscious Process Preceding Intuitive Decision", presents an innovative technique to study intuition, by which he was able to recognize different types of factors that contribute to an intuitive decision, such as implicit learning, the development of a somatic marker associated with specific choices, the degree to which this marker influences the decision and the possible contribution of a psi factor.

Miguel Castelo Branco, from the Department of Biophysics and Centre for Ophthalmology, IBILI, Faculdade de Medicina, Coimbra, Portugal, presents "The Neural Basis of Sensory Illusions, Imaginations of Real Objects and Hallucinatory Experiences". In his paper, he "explores and discusses current models in visual neurobiology that attempt to explain the phenomenology of visual illusions and hallucinations, as related to perception or imagination of real visual objects" (p. 167).

"Neurological Correlates of Out-of-Body Experiences and Autoscopy" was written by Dr. Olaf Blanke, from the Department of Neurology, University Hospital, Geneva, Switzerland. It is a review of empirical studies literature and reports of out-of-body experiences (OBEs) with the aim of offering a neuroscientific account of OBEs. Dr. Blanke argues that it is important to understand OBEs because such experiences do not occur only in "neurological populations, but [they appear] in approximately 10% of the healthy population and across all cultures" (p. 213).

In his article "Anarchy in the Brain: Disowned Actions and Free Won't", Sergio Della Sala, from Human Cognitive Neuroscience-Psychology, Edinburgh University, United Kingdom, presents and discusses the philosophical question concerning freedom and will having as a starting point case studies of people whose actions seem to be done in the opposite direction from those desired due to damages to the frontal lobes.

Thomas Benke, from the Clinic of Neurology, Innsbruck, Austria, in his article "Peduncular Hallucinosi: A Syndrome of Impaired Reality Monitoring", discusses a special type of hallucination called *peduncular hallucinosi*, "a brainstem syndrome characterized by hallucinations which are often associated with a state of hypersomnolence and oculomotor disturbances" (p. 233) and presents a study that offers a more comprehensive understanding of this syndrome.

Dr. Pim van Lommel, from the Division of Cardiology, Hospital Rijnstate, Aarnhem, The Netherlands, presents in "A New Concept about the Continuity of Our Consciousness Based on Recent Scientific Research on Near-Death

Experience" several recent cases of people who have reported near-death experiences. All of them are survivors of cardiac arrest, and they are from The Netherlands, the USA and the United Kingdom. Dr. van Lommel concludes that "our consciousness could be based on fields of information, consisting of waves, and that it originates in the phase-space" (p. 275).

During the event, there was a meeting for an interdisciplinary discussion about the relation between mind and brain. With the general title of "Consciousness and the Brain: Meeting Report", the volume brings the texts of the presentations done during the referred meeting. So, in "Meeting Report", published presentations include those of Stanislas Dehaene (Cognitive Neuroimaging Unit, Orsay, France), Pierre Maquet (Research Centre of Cyclotron, University of Liege, Belgium), Geraint Rees, (University College, London, United Kingdom), Dominic Ffytche (Institute of Psychiatry, London, United Kingdom), Victor Lamme (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands) and Fernando Lopes da Silva (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands). Dr. Dehaene presented the paper "Theoretical Concepts: The Consciousness Threshold as a Phase Transition in a Dynamical Workspace", Dr. Lamme presented "A Definition of Consciousness from the Neuroscience Perspective", Dr. Rees presented "Which Brain Systems Are Necessary for Conscious Perception?", Dr. Ffytche presented "What do We Know about the Timing of Conscious Perception", and Dr. Maquet presented "Functional Neuroanatomy of Human States of Consciousness". Finally, still in the "Meeting Report", we are informed that there were two other discussion meetings during the symposium: "Mind-Brain Methodology: Problems and Innovations" (Chair: Dr. Robert Morris, University of Edinburgh), and "Unusual Experiences and Brain Dysfunctions" (Chair: Dr. Alexandre Castro Caldas, University of Lisbon), but unfortunately the texts with the discussions are not available.

The section "Posters" presents a list of the 38 works granted by Bial Foundation from 1998 to 2003, but it does not provide the abstracts of the works. However, the abstracts are available in the website of Bial Foundation (www.bial.com). It was a very pleasant surprise to discover that not only the abstracts are there but also the whole Proceedings is available for free download.

We would like to strongly recommend reading this volume to those who are really interested in scientific evaluation of mind and brain relations, parapsychology and psychophysiology. The multiplicity of approaches presented is very rich and challenging even to those who have been in contact with the specialized literature. The quality of the presented studies demonstrates how rigorous Bial Foundation is in choosing the experts invited for the lectures and to evaluate the research project which will receive the grants. And last, but absolutely not least, it is indispensable to emphasize once again the importance of Bial Foundation for the development of areas as parapsychology and psychophysiology. By evaluating the list of supported research projects, we could say that Bial is responsible for the greatest part of the resources applied in

psi research nowadays in the world. And it is really important that they not only support the research, but also publish their results, making possible dialogue among scientists and spreading information to those interested in general.

WELLINGTON ZANGARI

Laboratory of Research for Social Psychology of Religion
Institute of Psychology
University of São Paulo
 Av. Prof Mello Moraes, 1721–Cidade Universitária
 05508-900–São Paulo/SP
 Brazil
 w.z@terra.com.br

FÁTIMA REGINA MACHADO

Faculdade de Comunicação e Filosofia
Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo
Rua Monte Alegre, 984–Perdizes
 05014-001–São Paulo/SP
 Brazil
 frm21@terra.com.br

My Thirty Years Among the Dead by Carl A. Wickland with N. M. Watts, C. L. Gorez and O.D. Gorez. National Psychological Institute, Los Angeles, 1924. 390 pp. (hardcover). (Also a 95 paperback version with the same title published by Amherst Press, Wisconsin, which has an introduction and postscript to the main volume and copies of some of the contents.)

This must be one of the strangest books in the annals of psychiatry and psychic research. The short version informs us that Carl August Wickland was born 1861 in Norland, Sweden; that he emigrated to St. Paul, Minnesota and in 1896 married Anna Anderson, also of Swedish birth. We learn that Mrs. Wickland was a medium who had given public demonstrations since 1891. She was to become the center of Wickland's practice and of his book.

We also learn that Wickland received his MD in 1900 from Dunham Medical College, Chicago, and was a general practitioner for several years. He was drawn to mental illness and in 1905 built a generator of static electricity for the treatment of obsession. Wickland explains, "The static machine which I use, constructed by myself under the direction of intelligent spiritual forces . . . contains fourteen 30 inch diameter glass discs, all active, giving a powerful current" (p. 14). A photo shows the machine next to Wickland and behind his wife. It is an ornate box of dark wood, about four by five feet, elevated a few feet from the floor. The front of the box is open and shows the machinery and the leads for the client to hold. Wickland's facility included a dining room for patients and a hall for social functions (p. 39).