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**The Spirit of Dr. Bindelof: The Enigma of Séance Phenomena** by Rosemarie Pilkington. San Antonio, TX: Anomalist Books, 2006. 241 pp. \$15.95 (paper). ISBN 1933665130.

In 1973, Rosemarie Pilkington enrolled in a course on "Paramechanics" by Gilbert Roller at the New School for Social Research in New York City. They became friends, and he told her about poltergeist occurrences that erupted around him when he was a boy and about séance room phenomena after he had joined up with other boys. Pilkington met another member of the group, Larry Levin, and was encouraged by him and Roller to write an account of their experiences.

Pilkington is a musician and writer with a Ph.D. in psychology from Saybrook Institute. She compiled and edited the anthology, *Men and Women of Parapsychology*, published by McFarland in 1987.

The first third of *The Spirit of Dr. Bindelof* is about a group of teenage boys formed by Gilbert and his friends to explore the phenomena they had evoked. It is a first in the history of parapsychology in that the protagonists were young and the phenomena strong and varied. Fraud is often a possibility in a darkened séance room, but in this case it seems unlikely. The remainder of the book is a collection of summaries of other cases.

### **The Bindelof Boys**

Gilbert recalls home life as "monstrous and terrible" (p. 7; following Pilkington, I use first names). His mother, Olga, a singer in operettas, was away much of the time and, when home, would fight with her husband, Gil's stepfather, and "destroy a whole kitchen of china," while the boy screamed and her husband patiently cleaned up. One day when Gil was 12 or 13, they heard sounds from Olga's bedroom and found her hairpins had flown from the dresser and hit the door. Wooden knobs from her shoe trees then came off and were

flung across the room. Gil was usually home during the occurrences but not always in the same room. The family first made light of the events, naming the force "Liz," and telling Liz to throw something, and some object would fly across the room. Things then became violent, dishes would come crashing off counters, and the words "GO, GO" would be crayoned in huge letters on the walls. Some of the violence seemed directed against Gil himself, as when he heard commotion from his toy cabinet and found a treasured toy engine ripped apart. This made his stepfather call in Hereward Carrington, the well-known psychic researcher. Carrington went through Gil's pockets, whereupon he found some hairpins and concluded that he had caused the turmoil. Olga accused her husband of bringing in Carrington to discredit her son. She took "Liz's" advice to "GO," taking the boy along. They rented rooms from friends with whom she had conducted séances where minor physical incidents had occurred. When Gil joined the group, the curtains of the closed window billowed out as by a strong wind, and furniture slid about. Olga and her husband then made up and the three lived more peacefully with only sporadic poltergeist activity.

At this stage, Gil became friends with Leonard Lauer and they began seances on their own. They would sit around a table in darkness, their hands on top of the table. At first nothing happened, then there were minor movements of the table, followed by more vigorous activity. Each boy became suspicious that the other was making the table move, but when it levitated to shoulder height, they became convinced it was for real. Leonard then invited his cousin Leo Kaiser and two friends, Larry Levin and Montague ("Monte") Ullman, to join the group. Monte was 16 and a sophomore at the City College of New York. It was apparently because of his exposure to the séance room phenomena that he became interested in parapsychology. Monte's ESP tests with dreaming subjects at Maimonides Hospital revealed important aspects of this ability.

After someone new joined the group, it took a few weeks to get things going again. About six sittings after Monte came, there was a slight tilting of the table, but it became more active in subsequent sessions. The boys wanted to get raps, and this eventually happened, with the sounds seemingly coming from the center of the table.

In April 1933, Monte wrote an account of the sessions for a course in logic he was taking at City College. "In these experiments, we . . . used an ordinary bridge table, keeping contact with the table and with each other by means of our hands. The room is usually light enough to permit us to see what takes place . . . After one or two moments the table would start to move and distinct knockings are heard . . ." (p. 16). After first getting the table to tilt, it would elevate "to a height of two or more feet." By then the group consisted of about seven boys. Monte wrote the minutes of the meetings until January 1934, when he went to medical school (p. 56).

Gil's small bedroom became the seance room and his nightstand became the experimental table. This was smaller and sturdier than the card table, and the boys, usually seven, would crowd around the stand, knees and feet touching and

hands overlapping. The sessions, which were held on Saturday nights, would be divided into half-hour segments followed by short rest periods. Afterwards the boys would troop down to a cafeteria where they would joust and tease.

The boys were intelligent and energetic, and it seems strange that they would spend their Saturday nights in a room where nothing much happened. But the comradeship and the hope of communicating with the "guiding spirits" (p. 19) or energies kept them going.

During their attempts at communication, a curious staccato sound developed that began softly, then swelled in a crescendo to a final loud "RAP" (p. 20). Some of the boys tried to reproduce the drum roll with its final loud boom manually but were unable to do so, including Gil, who was an accomplished pianist. He noted that if anyone had tried to do this normally, it would have produced movement that would have been obvious to the others.

The boys' restlessness and curiosity led them to new explorations. Gil was interested in photography, so they bought photographic plates that they inserted into light-proof metal holders. One was placed on the table, a boy placing his hand on the plate for an initial trial. They expected a rap from the table to indicate when the plate might be developed but, hearing nothing, they put the plate aside and went on with the session asking the force if it had a message for them. One of the boys would call out the letters of the alphabet, and the table would knock at the right letter. Rapping immediately spelled out "p-l-a-t-e" (p. 21). When the plate was developed, a distinct image of a hand appeared. Monte was suspicious that one of the others had prepared the plate beforehand. During another trial, when the boy sitting next to him placed his hand on the plate, Monte put his thumb on top of the boy's hand. The developed plate showed the hand with Monte's thumb superimposed. They then attempted "thought photographs" (p. 22) where Larry would hold the plate to his forehead while the rest attempted to transmit an image they spontaneously decided on. They first chose a milk bottle, but what turned up on the plate was an iodine bottle with the name of a neighborhood pharmacist faintly visible. In another trial, they tried for a page in a book chosen by Olga. Instead the plate showed overlapping newspaper columns. Their final target was a picture of Larry's new girlfriend whom none of them had met. Gil, however, said he thought of American Indians instead. The plate showed the silhouette of a Native American amulet that Gil's aunt Ellie had brought to Olga's apartment years before. It had been lost but turned up behind a dresser after this session.

The group wanted to communicate better with the force and asked the table if it could write them a message. When the table gave an affirmative knock, they placed a pencil and a piece of paper on the lower shelf of the nightstand. They could hear the pencil stir and fall a few times and then mark the paper. The performance improved in subsequent sessions, finally resulting in lengthy messages written rapidly in block letters, the paper often crumbling into a tight ball. Gil thought one or two of the others must have been preparing the writing beforehand and substituting it for the sheet in the nightstand. But this was difficult to reconcile with the fact that the writing often came in response to

spontaneous questions from the boys. Then there was a sequence of events that seemed clearly beyond fraud.

A message claimed that the force could touch the sitters. This made them ask to be touched, and one by one, they felt their hands and forearms being touched. Gil blurted out, "When it comes to me, I'm going to grab it" (p. 28). This resulted in a sudden stinging slap to his face as by a man's hand. A boy sitting across Gil with his back to the window, which allowed some light to seep in from the street, saw Gil's head snap back. They jumped up and turned on the light. Gil's cheek was red, and he felt dazed.

### **Dr. Bindelof Identifies Himself as a Physician**

The last Saturday of September 1933, the presence wrote, "I WAS AND AMSTILL AN ENTITY THAT IS ENTIRELY INDIVIDUAL. I CAN GOVERN THE POWER OF ANIMATION BY YOUR COMBINED EFFORTS" (p. 29). It went on to say that it had curative powers and identified itself as Dr. Bindelof, who said he was as desirous of healing people now as when alive. The message ended with, "WILL YOU BE THE DISCIPLES OF A DEAD MAN?" (p. 31). The boys retired to the cafeteria full of excitement and wonder at their newfound mentor.

One Tuesday in November 1933, Larry was suffering from a toothache in the right lower jaw due to an abscessed molar. Since it was a weekday, he and Gil could not get the others together and asked Olga to join them for a sitting. Bindelof agreed to attempt healing, and Larry felt strong pressure being applied below the diseased tooth (p. 44). The acute pain disappeared during the three minute treatment, while a dull residual pain took ten minutes to dissipate. After this, the tooth felt normal. In January 1934, George Kaiser, another member of the group to receive healing, stated, "After lifting my hand from the table, with a moist trembling hand, the Doctor . . . flexed my wrist backward and forward, then with his thumb massaged first the back of my hand and then my wrist. This continued for a period of about 30 seconds after which he massaged the palm. Putting my hand back on the table, he then patted my head" (p. 45). Leo recounted the same type of sensation during a healing in December 1933: "The Doctor first put his hand on my head and moved it from there to my forehead. He pushed my forehead back and I, thinking that he wished to apply pressure to that region, resisted him. He then left my forehead and wrote that I should not resist him." Having turned on the light to read the message, it was again turned off, "and I again felt his hand on top of my head. He then pushed my head back and I felt his fingers at a point upon the neck where the thyroid glands are situated . . . He mussed my hair up and then when he was through with the treatment he brushed it back into place again" (pp. 45-46). The treatment continued in the same vein the following week. "When he finished, he stroked the top of my head and then with a playful slap he left." In many instances, the treatment evidently worked.

Howard Frish was treated in December 1933. He wrote in 1966, "I'm sure that it was because I was jealous of the attention of the others for their ailments that

one evening I said I had been experiencing some pain in my eyes, or perhaps it was a headache which I complained of. When the lights were out, the speaker (I believe it was always [Larry]) asked Dr. Bindelof if he could help me. There was a rap for yes. At this point you can well imagine my trepidation! I believe we had already experienced the 'slapping' of [Gil]. I had no desire for spirit hands to press my eyes, but I sat in silent suspense. Suddenly, I felt from behind, fingers coming over my forehead towards my eyes. They were so gentle that there was no cause for alarm." Frish added that the hands of his regular doctor were gentle but firm and masculine while the hands of Dr. Bindelof "seemed almost feminine" (p. 48). He said that it would have been impossible for one of the others to approach him from behind. "The room was so small, so crowded. I can even remember that I sat almost with my back to one of the walls."

Gil's aunt Ellie, also a member of the group, sought treatment for a toothache in January 1934. She wrote in 1967, "I had recently had a tooth filled and unaccountably one weekend it began to ache. Since there was no hope of getting any medical help at that time I asked my nephew Gilbert if we could have a sitting and ask Dr. Bindelof to help me." After a friend and Olga, her sister, had joined them, "I suddenly felt a finger exploring the outside my cheek . . . Then I could feel it begin to go through my cheek, inside my mouth and touch the offending tooth. The pain stopped. I then asked to have the Doctor explain the cause of the pain. We placed a piece of paper and a pencil on the lower ledge of the table and within a few minutes could hear the pencil racing across the paper." Gil still had the paper, and it read, "AIR SPACE BELOW FILLING" (p. 47). Ellie said, "I didn't know if this was a possible explanation and I didn't care. The tooth had stopped hurting and it never bothered me again."

In addition to treating the sitters, their relatives and friends came for treatment much as they would to a medical clinic. A mother of one of the boys hoped to relieve a stomach condition that had troubled her for years. She wrote, "Dr. B. . . . pressed heavily on the top of my head, the side of the head and then the forehead" giving her "great relief" (p. 44). During a later treatment, she felt no hand, but "heard rumblings from within" (p. 45). Gil recalls, "an extremely loud and robust rumbling belch by the lady broke the intense concentration and stillness of the darkened room." The boys "were convulsed with laughter, which we tried in vain to suppress." The patient said the result was "beneficial," and after a third treatment that consisted of pressure on the head, "her stomach condition gradually improved."

### **The Photograph of Bindelof**

The group wondered what their spirit leader looked like and asked him in December 1933 if they might obtain a photograph. The message, as usual written rapidly in darkness with block letters, told them to take three photos, the first to be of Bindelof himself. They were to use a camera with full aperture, pointed in darkness at the center of the table. The lens should be open for 20–30 seconds. The second photo, which was supposed to show "lines of force with irregular spots on plate" (p. 51), was to be taken with a 75-watt light illu-

minating the room and should include the sitters. The lens should be open for the same period. For a third picture of "outside identities," the room was to be in darkness because "intelligent entities cannot be photographed in light." Bindelof instructed that the plate loading and development be witnessed, "so that it may be reported as such in the records." Six members of the group, including Monte, observed the opening of the sealed package of plates and later their development by Gil in the bathroom.

The first photo was the portrait of a distinguished-looking bearded gentleman with a 19th-century-style wing collar. The picture, which is shown on the cover of the book, is out of focus but quite distinct. It is in three quarter profile and resembles a portrait one would sit for rather than an informal snapshot. The second picture shows some of the sitters and in addition lines and irregular spots for which no explanation could be found. The third photograph depicts strange forms that Leonard thought resembled "helmeted soldiers carrying long guns or rifles" (p. 51f). The two latter photos are not shown in the book. Gil notes that none of the images are what one would expect under the conditions of the test.

If the picture of Bindelof is like the plates showing the iodine bottle and the Native American amulet, you might expect it to be of someone Gil or one of the others had seen and then forgotten. If this is the case, the picture will probably be found at some stage, especially now that it is on a book cover. If this should happen, it will probably and mistakenly be taken as evidence of fraud.

### **Bindelof Speaks**

The boys hoped for verbal communication, and in November 1933 Bindelof drew a diagram for a speaking trumpet which they then constructed. They only heard blowing sounds from the device. At the end of the month, Bindelof wrote that he needed a microphone and amplifier to be heard. These were acquired and eventually they heard the faint words "Leo in" (p. 54). Leo, who had previously been asked to leave, again joined the group, but nothing more happened. Members of the group were sometimes exiled for shorter or longer periods on instruction from Bindelof or because they were disruptive. Sometimes the sitting order of the group was changed to facilitate phenomena.

On January 27, 1934, the boys constructed a cardboard megaphone, and this time they had success. Larry felt the end of the megaphone being placed against his ear and heard a whisper, "Larry, Leonard, do you hear me?" Larry asked, "Will you improve your talking?" and got the reply "Maybe" (p. 58). Ellie, who had not been present at the sitting, came after it had ended and the group sat down again so that she might hear the doctor speak. The megaphone floated up to her ear. She heard, "Hello Ellie. How are you? Sorry you couldn't be here" (p. 59). This was the last oral communication from Bindelof.

Ullman later told Pilkington that Gil did not go into trance, but Gil himself said "that as soon as the lights went out he had an overwhelming desire to sleep" (p. 202 f.) and that his chin would go down on his chest.

### **The Group Disbands**

The interactions with Bindelof became erratic, perhaps because of the addition of new members, and in March 1934 the group decided to disband. Later that month, the core group formed the "New Bindelof Society" (p. 64) with no better success and the members drifted apart. According to Gil, "We all needed to concern ourselves with 'the real world' and our futures in it" (p. 69).

### **Gilbert's Role**

Gil wrote, "I don't think there is any doubt that I had been the source of the major occurrences in and out of the seance room, although I don't think I could have done it without the abundant energy of the others, especially Larry and Lenny" (p. 69). He was probably in trance during the sessions since he told Pilkington that as soon as the lights went out, his head would drop down on his chest.

After the breakup of the Bindelof group, Gil was the only member who "occasionally dabbled in seances . . . I suppose it's somewhat like the alcoholic who swears never again to touch a drop and then somewhere along the way takes a nip." (I know the feeling from my poltergeist explorations; being present when things move without tangible contact is exhilarating.)

Gil took at least two nips from the séance room bottle. He and his wife met with a group of spiritualists in the 1980s at a house that had a history of "odd occurrences" (p. 69). They seated themselves around a heavy oak table in a large room with a small electric light that provided good visibility. After a while, the centerboard of the table began to rise, first slowly and then with force as if it might take flight. Gil was captivated, realizing they had the beginning of a remarkable demonstration. But the group arose in panic, and the board fell back in place. Another time with another group, the table began to move across the room, with the sitters following or, perhaps, pushing it. Gil thought that it was being pushed and stepped out of the circle to check when stones fell on the party. There had been a similar incident during the Bindelof years when Gil and five others one night stole into a mausoleum at a Manhattan cemetery and were pelted with stones from inside the tomb. Larry thought they might have felt guilty because of the trespassing and that this contributed to "a self-inflicted 'stoning'" (p. 33).

### **The Bindelof Persona**

It is not difficult to suppose that Gil was the agent for the poltergeist incidents. His mother was inattentive and abusive, and it was her things that were mostly affected. Events directed at the agent also occur but are less common. It is more difficult to picture the process that formed the Bindelof persona and its behavior. A theory must account not only for the table levitations and knocks, but also for the photographic effects, the marked sensations of touch, the apparent healing, the deliberate movement of the megaphone, and the words it seemed to emit. The

rapid writing in darkness, often followed by crumbling of the page into a tight ball, is especially difficult to comprehend. Bindelof offered an explanation: "WHEN YOU HEAR THE PENCIL SCRATCHING AT THAT TERRIFIC SPEED[,] YOU HAVE PRESUMED THAT I AM WRITING AT THAT SPEED. I AM ACTUALLY WRITING AT A NORMAL RATE—HERE IS WHAT HAPPENS[:] A TYPE OF FORCE (WHAT IT IS I DO NOT QUITE KNOW MYSELF) FORMS A SPHERE AROUND THE PAPER AND PENCIL. WHEN I WRITE A MESSAGE THAT YOU APPROXIMATE WOULD TAKE ABOUT 20 MINUTES TO PRINT ITDOESTAKEME20MINUTES BUT THE SPHERE REDUCES THE TIME FACTOR SO AS TO MAKE THE WRITING APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DONE IN LESS THAN A MINUTE ... AS FOR THE CONSUMMATION OF ENERGY 20 MINUTES OF ENERGY IS CONSUMED IN THE ONE MINUTE. WHEN THIS FORCE DISSIPATES IT ... CONTRACTS TOWARDS THE CENTRE OF THE SPHERE DRAWING THE PAPER IN WITH IT AND CRUSHING IT TO THE EXTENT YOU SEE" (p. 54).

Stretching of clock time that provides for an extension of experienced time is often reported during sport, as when a football player enters "the zone," and by people who have undergone an accident or been near death. Time seems to slow down so that events that follow each other in rapid succession to the onlooker are experienced slowly and one by one by the person. Until I read the Bindelof excerpt, it had not occurred to me that a similar process might occur in consensual space. This has given me a new perspective on the cases of poltergeist activity I have investigated where movements of objects were often extremely rapid (e.g., Roll & Storey, 2004).

### **The Second Part of the Book**

In the second part of the book, we enter a different world. Instead of a group of boys who were driven by excitement about the phenomena they engendered, we mostly hear about adults whose reputation, and often income, depended on their capacity to produce convincing occurrences. It is not surprising that some of them resorted to fraud. There are clear exceptions, such as D. D. Home, the Scottish born medium, who produced extraordinary phenomena in the second half of the 19th century, including the playing of a harmonica by invisible hands, movements of objects, and levitation of the medium himself. Like Gilbert Roller, Home began his career as a poltergeist boy who was mistreated by his caregiver, in his case an aunt who evicted him from the home when he was 18, believing the phenomena were of the devil. Home was investigated by Sir William Crookes, who, among other things, verified Home's ability to change the weight of objects, using instruments Crookes had built for the purpose. There was never evidence of fraud.

This was true also of Indridi Indridason, a printer's apprentice in Reykjavik, Iceland. The wife of the family with whom he was staying invited him to join her in a group that was experimenting with table tilting. The table began to

shake violently as soon as he was seated. The phenomena accelerated in the home of Einar Kvaran, the leader of the group, and he and five others formed the Experimental Society to study Indridason. It was an accomplished group that included a future prime minister, a High Court judge, and a psychiatrist. They got Indridason a small house and held twice-weekly meetings from September 1905 to June 1906, where sounds, lights, materializations, and levitations of large objects, including Indridason himself, occurred. Other times, he experienced spontaneous levitation. Once, when he was getting dressed in his room, he screamed for help. A member of the group rushed in and found him "balancing in the air with his feet towards the window" (p. 143). Indridason, who contracted typhoid and had tuberculosis, died at the age of 29. Considering his short career, his abilities were comparable to those of Home.

Pilkington notes that Home and another physical medium also had tuberculosis. She had read an interview in *The New York Times* with a Dr. Paul Sledzik about old superstitions regarding consumption, as it was then called, where Sledzik said that the malady was associated with bursts of energy and also with a powerful sex drive. Pilkington observes that libidinal energy has been associated with psychic and psychokinetic powers. "We know for certain," she writes, "that budding sexual power flowed through the Bindelof kids" (p. 146), and she speculates that it may also have been a factor for the three physical mediums.

Another study that seems above suspicion was directed by Kenneth Batchelor, a psychologist in England who, with two friends, Miss P. M. Coghlan and William Click, decided to try table tilting. None of them claimed mediumistic ability, and they were surprised when the table came off the floor in the eleventh session. They did 200 sessions from April 1964 to December 1965. Click was absent from 120 of the sessions during which there were no effects. But in the 80 sessions he attended, 70 resulted in physical phenomena. The first total levitation of the table occurred in darkness, which left them uncertain about what actually happened. Batchelor then attached electric switches to the table legs and connected the wires to a light on top, such that this would come on only if all four legs were off the floor, which it then did, sometimes staying up for about 20 seconds. The light also had the advantage that they could see that all hands were on top of the table and not lifting it.

Eusapio Palladino is in a category of her own. She was a simple-minded laundress from Naples, Italy, who cheated when she could. She performed at the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in England under lax conditions of which she took full advantage. Nevertheless, a large number of experienced researchers attested that she produced phenomena when cheating was impossible. To settle the matter once and for all, in 1908 the SPR sent three men to Naples to test Palladino. They were Everard Fielding, Hereward Carrington, and W. W. Baggally, all known as exposers of fraudulent mediums. During their sittings with Palladino, the researchers held her hands and feet and still she produced spectacular table levitations, movements of objects, and phantom hands and heads. The men were also grabbed by human-like hands.

Pilkington traces the historical origin of physical mediumship to 1848 when the Fox family in Hydesville, New York, heard knocks from a table where their two daughters, aged about 14 and 12, were seated. The knock led to apparent communication with the spirits of the departed, and the Spiritualist movement was born. The Fox sisters were accused of making the sounds by clicking their toe bones, which seems highly unlikely, but one of them confessed to fraud when she was grown, widowed, and alcoholic. She later recanted, saying she had been offered \$1,500 to admit fraud.

The chapter that tells of Crookes's investigation of Florence Cook and her phantom companion Katie King is not compelling. Two photos (p. 108) show a portrait of Cook juxtaposed to a photo of Katie King from a séance. The two look remarkably alike except that Katie King is surrounded by "ectoplasm," which resembles white muslin. On one occasion, Crookes asked the phantom's permission "to clasp her in my arms" (p. 108) as an experiment. Permission granted, he found her "as material a being as Miss Cook herself." Later on, Cook apparently confessed "that 'Katie King' was a hoax to cover her adulterous affair with Crookes" (p. 111). Yet, Pilkington thinks the phenomena were real.

I am also dubious about the ectoplasm of the French medium Marthe Beraud, known as "Eva C." (p. 125). In addition to a white muslin-looking material, she produced images of people. Once the word MIRO (p. 128) appeared on the substance. This turned out to be part of the masthead of the journal *Le Miroir* and some of the faces looked like cut-offs from back issues of the journal. Nevertheless, seasoned investigators like Charles Richet and the physician Gustave Geley gave detailed descriptions of where the substance turned into more or less well-formed hands as they watched. It is perhaps more likely that the darkened and charged séance room transformed amorphous shapes of muslin into recognizable limbs.

Pilkington regards the photographs of faces as misleading because they seem to be paper cut-offs attached to the medium's hair or clothing. The witnesses agreed that, although they looked that way in the photos, "in reality they had moved and acted alive at the seances" (p. 128). Again, it is not difficult to suppose that the liveliness was contributed by the séance room and the observers.

The more recent series of photos produced by Ted Serios and published by the late Jule Eisenbud are also dubious, although they are accepted at face value by Pilkington. Eisenbud was a friend of mine, and when *The World of Ted Serios* (Eisenbud, 1967) was published, he sent my wife and me a copy. Paging through the book with its striking photos convinced me that this was an important work, and I offered to write a review for the *Journal of Parapsychology*. I learnt that Serios used a Polaroid camera pointed at himself and sometimes produced photos, usually of buildings. He had become accustomed to using "a gismo" (p. 24), a plastic tube that he held close to the camera lens. Eisenbud examined the gismo and found that the ends were covered by cellophane and that inside one end there was a circular piece of film negative covered by stove blacking, presumably to render the gismo opaque.

In preparation for a trial, Serios would demand several shots of whiskey and work himself into a state of intense concentration and then ask for a camera. Someone would bring one, Serios would hold up his gismo, and he or the person would snap a picture. I thought that the gismo resembled the plastic tubes sold in souvenir shops that show pictures of important buildings (several of Serios's pictures were tourist destinations). I obtained such a tube, held it in front of my camera, and got photos that were indistinguishable from Serios's. Like the cameras used by Serios, mine had a flash, and this reflected off my shirt, providing light for the film. My photos showed a blurred oviform shadow from the tube. Similar shadows appeared in some of the photos by Serios: for instance, the photo of Trajan's Column reproduced by Pilkington on page 185.

On the other hand, I agree with Pilkington that the "Philip" phenomena were probably real. A group in Toronto, Canada, decided to invent a ghost who then seemed to produce strong table movements and other phenomena and to communicate with the group by raps. She presents other material that space does not allow me to discuss.

While Pilkington may not always have been sufficiently cautious in her interpretations of the cases she reviews, the Bindelof case is of great importance. She has done us all an important service by bringing this material to our notice.

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### Acknowledgment

Thanks to Gary L. Owens for his support in writing this review.

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