

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Early Psychological Research Reference Works: Remarks on Nandor Fodor's *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science*

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Submitted March 11, 2020; Accepted July 5, 2020; Published December 15, 2020

DOI: [10.31275/20201785](https://doi.org/10.31275/20201785)

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Abstract—Some early reference works about psychic phenomena have included bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and general overview books. A particularly useful one, and the focus of the present article, is Nandor Fodor's *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (Fodor, n.d., circa 1933 or 1934). The encyclopedia has more than 900 alphabetically arranged entries. These cover such phenomena as apparitions, auras, automatic writing, clairvoyance, hauntings, materialization, poltergeists, premonitions, psychometry, and telepathy, but also mediums and psychics, researchers and writers, magazines and journals, organizations, theoretical ideas, and other topics. In addition to the content of this work, and some information about its author, it is argued that the *Encyclopaedia* is a good reference work for the study of developments from before 1933, even though it has some omissions and bibliographical problems.

Keywords: *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science*; Nandor Fodor; psychological research reference works; history of psychological research

INTRODUCTION

The work discussed in this article, Nandor Fodor's *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (Fodor, n.d., circa 1933 or 1934), is a unique compilation of information about psychological research and related topics up to around 1933. Widely used by writers interested in overviews of the literature, Fodor's work is part of a reference literature developed over the years to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge about the early publications of the field by students of psychic phenomena. In this article I would like to bring Fodor's contribution to the attention of contemporary readers

with a summary of the content of the *Encyclopaedia*, brief information about its author, and developments around the time of its publication.

Reference Works Covering Pre-1930 Developments

These reference works include various bibliographies (Alvarado, 1984, 2010a). An example is Albert L. Caillet's *Manuel Bibliographique des Sciences Psychiques ou Occultes* (1912), which, in addition to much material about religion and occultism, has relevant information for those interested in psychic phenomena. Caillet presented a list of authors belonging to what he referred to as occult metaphysics or modern psychism, including those “who have studied the Manifestations of the Invisible by the processes of Modern Science, abandoned until then to pure superstition and ignorance, apart from the Initiates who kept them more or less secret” (Vol. 1, p. xxxii; this, and other translations, are mine). Some of the authors mentioned were J. Rhodes Buchanan, William Crookes, Carl du Prel, Edmund Gurney, Justinus Kerner, Cesare Lombroso, Frederic W. H. Myers, and Karl Ludwig von Reichenbach.¹

Other bibliographies from the old days, some of which have been forgotten by many today, are *Histoire de la Médecine et des Sciences Occultes: Notes Bibliographiques pour Servir a l'Histoire du Magnétisme Animal* (Dureau, 1869), *Best Books on Spirit Phenomena: 1847–1925* (Lovi, 1925), “La Bibliografia dello Spiritismo” (Morselli, 1908, Vol. 1, pp. xiii–xlvi), and “Bibliography: Part II: *Modern Spiritualism, 1848–1867*” (Shorter, 1867). Later works have continued this tradition, presenting references from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²

In addition, our studies of the past are greatly assisted by various book-length overviews of the field (e.g., Carrington, 1930; Holms, 1925; Mackenzie, 1923; Moser, 1935; Podmore, 1897; and Richet, 1922). One with a particularly good bibliography is René Sudre's *Introduction à la Métapsychique Humaine* (1926) (see Figure 1).³

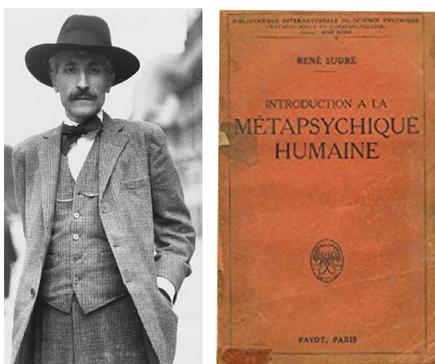


Figure 1. René Sudre and his *Introduction à la Métapsychique Humaine* (1926).

Also useful are encyclopedias such as those that are available and focus on occultism (e.g., Bosc de Vèze, 1904; Spence, 1920), which brings us to the unique work discussed here, Nandor Fodor's *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (n.d., circa 1933 or 1934). Arthur Press in London published the book without a publication date. Fortunately, the book's preface, by Oliver Lodge, was dated October 4, 1933, indicating that the book was published after that date in 1933, or later in 1934, which seems more likely.⁴

Psychical Research During the 1930s

Psychical research presented several interesting developments during the 1930s. In his book *Parapsychologie: Die Wissenschaft von den "okkulten" Erscheinungen*, German biologist and philosopher Hans Driesch (1932) wrote about methodological and theoretical aspects of the field, focusing on deception in the first section of his work. The empirical approach in psychical research, Driesch argued, was as rational as that in other sciences and had the possibility of bringing understanding via its research efforts.

In France, in one of his last books, *La Grande Espérance* (1933), physiologist Charles Richet referred to psychical research, which he called metapsychics, as the investigation of the inhabitual. He believed the field promised much in terms of future knowledge about human nature. But in his view: "The truths of metapsychics do not reverse any of the laws that science has established. They introduce in science a new chapter, the inhabitual. That is all" (p. 246).

In the United States Hereward Carrington also wrote about the subject. He stated that scientific acceptance of psychic phenomena was predicated on future research, efforts that would eventually be found persuasive to other scientists. In his opinion,

when that turning-point has been reached, there can be no question that adequate funds for the work will be forthcoming, and that rapid progress will be made in all branches of this investigation. Implications and interpretations will follow. Our prime need, still, is well-observed, thoroughly authenticated *facts*. (Carrington, 1937, p. xvi)

Some aspects of the range of topics investigated during the

1930s were evident in international congresses of psychical research held in London (Besterman, 1930) and in Oslo (Anonymous, n.d., circa 1935). The papers at the 1935 congress came from participants of various nationalities, among them Denmark, England, France, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, and Norway. A few of the presentations were about cerebral radiations (by Ferdinando Cazzamalli), “cryptesthesia” (Charles Richet, in absentia), mediumistic controls (Thorstein Wereide), mediumistic predictions of a death (K. E. Bodtker), precognitive dreams (W. H. C. Tenhaeff), telekinetic effects (Angelos Tanagras), transfiguration (Nandor Fodor), and word associations tests with mediums (Whately Carington) (see also Fodor, 1935).

The 1930s also brought us the ESP experiments conducted at Duke University published in J. B. Rhine’s *Extra-Sensory Perception* (Rhine, 1934a), elsewhere (e.g., Rhine, 1934b, 1934c, 1936), and popularized in *New Frontiers of the Mind* (Rhine, 1937) (see Figure 2). Reports of ESP experiments were also published by other members of Rhine’s research team (e.g., Bond, 1937; Price & Pegram, 1937), and by researchers in England such as Whately Carington (1935), S. G. Soal (1931), and G. N. M. Tyrrell (1935). This last author noticed that the gifted psychic he was testing was more successful when she had a positive state of mind, and when she showed a tendency for “losing herself” in the experiments, which Tyrrell interpreted as a form of dissociation.

In addition there were studies and analyses of a variety of

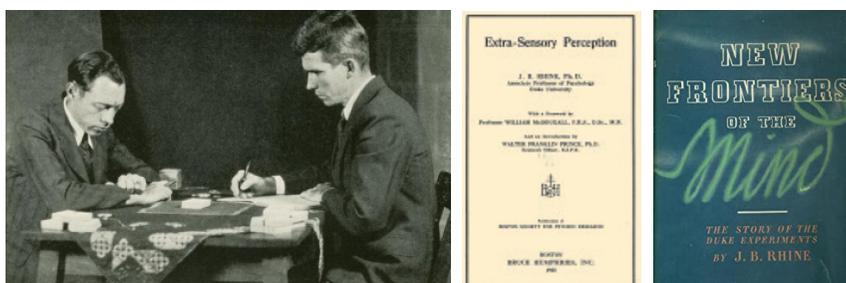


Figure 2. J. B. Rhine (right) and experimental participant Hubert Pearce. Rhine’s *Extra-Sensory Perception* (1934a) and *New Frontiers of the Mind* (1937).

experiences, such as hauntings (Bret, 1938), apparitions (Hart & Hart, 1933), out-of-body experiences (Mattiesen, 1931), and ESP during psychoanalytic therapy (Servadio, 1935/1953). Premonitions were

discussed by various authors (e.g., Saltmarsh, 1934; Vivante, 1933), an important example being Charles Richet in his book *L'Avenir et la Premonition* (n.d., circa 1931). With premonitions, Richet stated at the end of his book, “let us boldly enter the cryptocosmos, the world of the occult, because we can rest assured that there are wonders to discover” (pp. 237–238).

There was also attention to mediumship, as seen in methodological discussions (e.g., Pratt, 1936, Saltmarsh & Soal, 1930), and in studies of mental mediumship (e.g., Balfour, 1935; Thomas, 1937). This was the general time period in which Whately Carington (1934) started publishing his word association studies with spirit communicators.

Some of the mental mediums studied included Eileen J. Garrett (Rhine, 1934c), and Gladys Osborne Leonard (Richmond, 1936). In his book *De la Planète Mars en Terre Sainte: Art et Subconscient*, archaeologist and historian Waldemar Deonna (1932) analyzed the mediumistic paintings of Hélène Smith (the pseudonym of Catherine Élise Müller), studied earlier by Théodore Flournoy (1900). Deonna (see Figure 3) argued that Flournoy’s psychological interpretation of the medium’s communications fueled the medium’s unconscious mind to produce paintings and visions for the purpose of rejecting Flournoy’s psychological interpretation of her mediumship,⁵ which she believed were caused by spirits, and thus to exteriorize her desires. The paintings, Deonna believed, were possibly thanks to a “slow mental incubation: unconscious desires, childhood recollections, autosuggestions, [and] external suggestions” (p. 205).

There was also work conducted with physical mediums, such



Figure 3. Ernesto Bozzano, Waldemar Deonna, and Eugène Osty (left to right).

as with Rudi Schneider (Osty & Osty, 1931–1932), among others (e.g., De Goes, 1937; Servadio, 1932; Stephenson, 1936). Some of them were studies of psychic photography (e.g., Johnson, 1934), and materialization phenomena (e.g., Blacher, 1931/1932; Hamilton, 1934). The last-mentioned author, physician Thomas Glendenning Hamilton, not only documented and photographed materializations, but also reported that some of his mediums “often exhibited rhythmic movements of their hands or feet—stamping, rubbing the hands, rubbing the wood of the cabinet, rubbing their arms and sometimes the arms of the adjacent sitter or another medium . . .” (p. 119). This was related to, according to Hamilton (and the medium’s spirit controls), the release of forces used to build a materialized form, an idea prevalent in the materialization literature (Alvarado, 2019c).

In addition to these ideas of mediumistic forces, there were also many conceptual discussions, a leading example being discarnate agency, and survival of death in general. Some examples are E. R. Dodds’ (1934) well-known article “Why I do Not Believe in Survival,” and the opinions of various others (e.g., Rhine, 1933; Richet, 1934). In addition, the 1930s literature presents discussions about two types of telepathy (Bozzano, 1933b), offering theoretical ideas to explain such phenomena as out-of-body experiences, apparitions of the living and hauntings (Bret, 1938), and precognitive experiences (Tanagras, 1933).

In Italy, the prolific Ernesto Bozzano (see Figure 3) was publishing long discussions about a wide range of phenomena. These included such topics as raps, mediumistic xenoglossy, transfiguration, and mediumship, and hauntings (Bozzano, 1933a, 1933c, 1934, 1935). French researcher Eugène Osty (see Figure 3) also wrote much in the 1930s about several topics, such as haunted houses (Osty, 1936a), premonitions of events in the remote future (Osty, 1936b), and performances of psychics in public (Osty, 1937b).

Nandor Fodor

Oliver Lodge wrote in the preface to the *Encyclopaedia*:

An encyclopaedia of Psychic Science!—I had not thought that such a preparation was possible, nor would it have been possible without a combination of great energy with considerable knowledge such

as is possessed by the Hungarian Dr. Nandor Fodor. (Lodge, n.d., p. xxvii)

The following brief discussion of Fodor is based on an essay written by Leslie Shepard (1966) and the writings of others (Spraggett, 1969; Timms, 2012), including Fodor (1959a, 1968) himself (see Figure 4).

Nandor Fodor (1895–1964), who was born in Hungary, qualified for an LL.D. Throughout his life he worked as a journalist, a psychical researcher, and a psychoanalyst. His interest in psychical research started in 1921 when he went to live in New York. He had many séances with mediums during the 1920s, among them William Cartheuser and Nino Pecoraro.



Figure 4. Nandor Fodor.

In his book *Mysterious People*, Fodor (1934b) compiled articles he had published in the *Bristol Evening World* about several mediums, among them Leonora Piper, the Davenport Brothers, William Stainton Moses, D. D. Home, Franek Kluski, and Stanislaw Tomczyk.

Fodor wrote about his career in psychical research:

I had no official position in the psychic movement until, in 1933, I was appointed Assistant Editor to *Light*,⁶ the weekly organ of the London Spiritualist Alliance . . . I held the post until May 1935, concurrently for a year, with a new office, that of Research Officer of the International Institute for Psychical Research. (Fodor, 1968, p. 72)

While Fodor worked at the Institute he conducted investigations of poltergeists and mediums. An example of the latter were his sittings with apport medium Lajos Pap (Fodor, n.d., circa 1936; see also Nahm, 2019). But he was fired from the Institute as a reaction to his psychosexual ideas about a poltergeist case (Fodor, 1958, 1959a; Timms, 2012).

Fodor published much about psychic topics over the years, including *These Mysterious People* (Fodor, 1934b), *Haunted People*

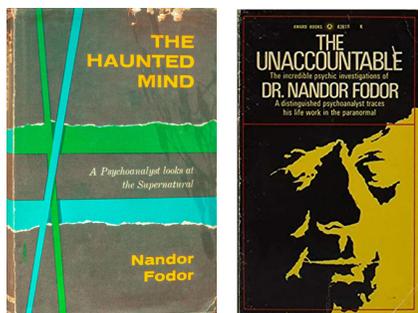


Figure 5. Fodor's *The Haunted Mind* (1959a) and *The Unaccountable* (1968).

(Carrington & Fodor, 1951), *On the Trail of the Poltergeist* (Fodor, 1958), *The Haunted Mind* (Fodor, 1959a) (Figure 5), *Mind Over Space* (Fodor, 1962), *Between Two Worlds* (Fodor, 1964), *The Unaccountable* (Fodor, 1968), and *Freud, Jung, and Occultism* (Fodor, 1971).⁷ He also worked as a psychoanalyst in New York and published on the subject and on various psychological

matters (e.g., Fodor, 1945a, 1946, 1949, 1951).

Fodor was also interested in theory, as can be seen in his articles about apports and materialization phenomena (Fodor, 1932, 1934a). But most of his writings in this area were about psychoanalytic ideas. Like Sigmund Freud, and various psychoanalysts, among them Helene Deutsch, Edward Hitschmann, Emilio Servadio, and Paul Schilder (see Devereux, 1953), Fodor (1942, 1947/1953) discussed ESP and dreams in the context of psychoanalytic therapy. He suspected telepathy to be an unconscious cognitive faculty in which “the tie of love opens one’s unconscious to another” (Fodor, 1947/1953, p. 295).

Fodor later extended his interests to the psychology and sexual aspects of poltergeists (e.g., Fodor, 1948, 1958, 1959a, Chapter 5). In fact, his psychological examination of the Thornton Heath poltergeist obtained Freud’s support, expressed in a 1938 letter he sent to Fodor (Fodor, 1958, pp. 10–11).

In an untitled short essay that appeared in Francis J. Mott’s *Consciousness Creative* (1937, pp. 153–157), Fodor argued that poltergeists were generally associated with youngsters approaching puberty. He wrote:

The loss of its power always coincides with the beginning of the menses with a natural relief of the sexual tension. It is as if the sexual energies which are blossoming into maturity within the body would, instead of taking their normal course, be turned into another channel and exteriorized beyond the limits of the body, producing the manifestation in question. (p. 155)⁸

Fodor (1948) suggested that poltergeists were produced by psychokinetic actions from living persons and not from spirits. “Are we facing in the poltergeist,” he asked some years later, “a psychosomatic dissociation, a mental split conjoined with an abnormal employment of extra-physical organismic energies?” (Fodor, 1959a, p. 72). Although not generally acknowledged, such psychodynamic speculations about poltergeists were not new with Fodor. Such discussions had appeared in the German psychical research literature, particularly in the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* (e.g., Schrenck-Notzing, 1928, pp. 518–520; Simsa, 1931; Winterstein, 1926b; see also Winterstein, 1926a, in a different journal).⁹

THE CONTENT OF THE *ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE*

As was mentioned above, the compilation of information that went into the *Encyclopaedia* was monumental, containing more than 900 entries in alphabetical order. This becomes more impressive when one realizes that Fodor included information published in languages other than English (mainly French, German, and Italian), and that he did not have the Internet or computer resources. As an aside, Fodor (1959b) wrote in later years that Hereward Carrington had complimented him for the “tremendous amount of work” (p. 111) behind the *Encyclopaedia*.

Many of the entries included by Fodor were about phenomena. A few examples were: *Apparitions*, *Apports*, *Auras*, *Automatic Writing*, *Bilocation*, *Clairvoyance*, *Direct Voice*, *Emanations*, *Fire Immunity*, *Haunting*, *Levitation*, *Luminous Phenomena*, *Materialisation*, *Obsession*, *Premonitions*, *Psychometry*, *Raps*, *Retrocognition*, *Table Turning*, and *Telepathy*. Some of these entries were quite long, covering many aspects of the phenomena. For example, the *Haunting* one had sections about specific cases, and other topics, among them the “laying of the haunTERS” (p. 162), “premonitory haunting” (p. 162), and “speculations of the early S.P.R. researchers” (p. 164). Others had interesting information, such as the following about *Automatic Writing*:

The quantity of automatically-written books is such that it is difficult to mention more than a few as, for instance, Elsa Barker’s *Letters from a Living Dead Man*, *War Letters from a Living Dead Man*, *Last Letters from a Living Dead Man* . . . the remarkable books of

Patience Worth . . . produced through Mrs. John H. Curran of St. Louis, . . . *The Seven Purposes* by Margaret Cameron, . . . J. S. Ward's *Gone West* and *A Subaltern in the Spirit Lands*, the anonymous *Private Dowding* (by W. Tudor Pole), the *Revelations of Louise*, *Claude's Book*, 1908, *Claude's Second Book*, 1919, and *Claude's Third Book*, 1920 by Mrs. Kelway Bamber . . . (p. 23)

There were also entries about less common phenomena, including *Exteriorization of Sensitivity*, *Dematerialization*, *Music*, *Touches*, *Transportation* (of the human body), *Perfumes*, and *Winds*. Music referred to both musical sounds heard in séances using instruments, or without them, and to musical sounds coming from instruments played by mediums, but Fodor included music heard in connection with deaths as well. Although not mentioned by Fodor, Ernesto Bozzano (1922) had published before the appearance of the *Encyclopaedia* a study of these occurrences, which he called transcendental music. He presented 30 cases in his article classified as music heard: via mediums (mediums playing instruments under supposed spirit influence or music heard in their presence with no instruments), via telepathy, in hauntings, in cases unrelated to death, around deathbeds, and after a death.

The entry about *Control* (spirit controls) is particularly interesting, covering topics such as the “human qualities of the control” (pp. 57–58), the “picturesque element” (pp. 58–59), and “control by the living” (pp. 58–61). Interestingly, Fodor wrote:

There are many instances in which the same control has manifested through different mediums. They have particular favours for one medium at a time and on his death or loss of power pass on to another. John King, who claimed to have been Sir Henry Owen Morgan, the buccaneer king, first appeared in the Davenport seances and is still performing his duties . . . American Indians figure as controls in a surprising number of cases. They bear romantic or plain Indian names . . . Other exotic nationalities are also met with. Tien-Sen-Tie (J. J. Morse) was a Chinaman. Eyen (Mrs. Travers Smith) an Egyptian, Morambo (Mrs. Wallis) a Kaffir; Feda of Mrs. Leonard is an Indian native, Dr. Hooper is attended by a fakir, Mrs. Brittain by a Senegalese child, Mrs. Garrett has an Arab control . . . Children furnish another interesting group of controls. The best-known names are: Feda (Mrs. Osborne Leonard), Nelly

(Mrs. Thompson), Dewdrop (Bessie Williams), Sunshine (Mrs. Meurig Morris), Little Stasia (Mlle. Tomczyk), Ninia and Yolande (Mme. D'Esperance), Belle (Mrs. Annie Brittain), Bell (Mrs. F. M. Perriman), Harmony (Mrs. Susannah Harris), Snow Drop (Mrs. Maud Lord Drake) and Pocka (Miss Wood). (pp. 58–59)

A particularly interesting entry is the one about *Death*, which according to Fodor is “the greatest psychical experience” (p. 80). The discussion considered near-death experiences, as well as seeing spirits come out of the body of people at death. According to Fodor: “Dr. H. Baraduc attempted to secure photographic record when his son and wife died. He found that in each case a luminous, cloud-like mass appeared over the bodies and impressed the photographic plate” (p. 82). I wish he had provided more information, and a bibliographical reference, about this interesting use of photography, which French physician Hippolyte Baraduc reported in his short book *Mes Morts* (1908).

Fodor also wrote about famous cases, among them *Angels of Mons*, *Bealing Bells*, *Cock Lane Ghost*, *Drummer of Tedworth*, *Epworth Phenomena*, *The Watseka Wonder*, and *Willington Mill*. The entry about *Angelique Cottin* presents an old case of electrical-like physical phenomena, some in poltergeist style, that were recorded by French physician Stanislas Tanchou (1846) in some detail (see Figure 6). As mentioned by Fodor, Tanchou got the famous scientist François Arago interested in the case, which ended with a commission of other scientists, among them Henri Becquerel, who presented a report at the Academy of Sciences. Initially Arago observed some phenomena he was not sure about (Anonymous, 1846, p. 306), and then he proceeded to gather together an investigative commission. As Fodor wrote:

“Their report, submitted three weeks later, only admitted the sudden and violent movements of the chair on which the girl was sitting. They were not satisfied, however, that these movements were not due to muscular force” (p. 66). Fodor did not cite the report, but an examination of it

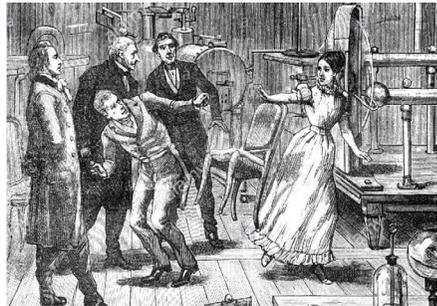


Figure 6. Sketch of incidents reported around Angelique Cottin.



Figure 7. Ferdinando Cazzamalli.

shows that the commission dismissed the case (Arago et al., 1846).

Other entries were about theoretical ideas, such as *Animism*, *Methetherial*, *Psychic Force*, *Psychorrhagic Diathesis*, *Telergy*, and *Spirit Hypothesis*. But theory was also presented in entries about specific phenomena, among them *Apparitions*, *Hauntings*, *Psychometry*, and *Telepathy*. In the latter entry Fodor had a section about the “wave theory” (pp. 376–377) in which he mentioned William Crookes and Ferdinando Cazzamalli (Figure 7). “The wave theory of telepathy,” he wrote, “has been abandoned” (p. 377). But this was not the case with some who, like Cazzamalli, continued discussing electromagnetic brain radiations during the 1930s and even later (Garzia, 1991).

Related to the concept of waves, was the main idea of the entry *Emanations*, or the exteriorization of forces out of the body to produce psychic phenomena. This is an ancient concept that arrived in psychical research mainly via the mesmeric and spiritualistic literatures, but that to some extent was also nurtured by ideas from physics (Alvarado, 2006, 2015; Noakes, 2019). The concept of vital, nervous, or psychic forces as the agent behind telepathy, telekinesis, healing, materialization, and other phenomena, was seriously discussed by many during the 1930s, as seen in the writings of Carrington (n.d., circa 1939), Hamilton (1934), and Osty (1937a). But as argued before (Alvarado, 2006), these ideas became less popular in academic parapsychological circles in later years.

An example of the application of these ideas to account for physical mediumship during the 1930s are the comments of Thomas Glendenning Hamilton. He argued that the phenomena produced by his mediums suggested the action of

unknown energy-accumulation and energy-storing processes going on over a considerable period of experimental time with the psycho-dynamic energies thus acquired being drawn from every mediumistic source available throughout each series of consecutive sittings. (Hamilton, 1934, p. 120)

Other entries presented by Fodor in the *Encyclopaedia* consisted of short biographies of scholars and researchers involved with psychic phenomena. Examples were: *Ernesto Bozzano*, *Dr. Hereward Carrington*, *Dr. W. J. Crawford*, *Prof. Hans Driesch*, *Dr. Giovanni Battista Ermacora*, *Prof. Théodor Flournoy*, *Dr. Gustave Geley*, *Edmund Gurney*, *James Hervey Hyslop*, *Sir Oliver Lodge*, *Cesar Lombroso*, *Enrico Morselli*, *Frederick* [sic] *William Henry Myers*, *Dr. Konstantin Oesterreich*, *Dr. Eugen* [sic] *Osty*, *Dr. Charles Richet*, and *Baron A. Schrenck-Notzing*.

Fodor also listed several figures who were active in different ways as theorists, researchers, and organizers of different sorts before the 1870s. This group included *J. Rhodes Buchanan*, *John Worth Edmonds*, *Baron L. de Guldenstubbe*, *Robert Hare, M.D.*, *Allan Kardec*, *Dr. Justinus Kerner*, *James J. Mapes*, *Dr. Maximilian Perty*, and *Marc Thury*.

Some of the many mediums and psychics included were: *Miss Florence Cook*, *Mrs. Margery Crandon*, *William Eglinton*, *Pascal Forthuny*, *Daniel Dunglas Home*, *Franek Kluski*, *Mrs. Gladys Osborne Leonard*, *Francis Ward Monck*, *William Stainton Moses*, *Stephan Ossowiecki*, *Eusapia Paladino*, *Mrs. Leonore* [sic] *E. Piper* (Figure 8), *Willy and Rudi Schneider*, and *Dr. Henry Slade*. A few entries were about magnetic somnambules, among them the *Alexis & Adolphe Didier Brothers*, *Emma*, and *Adèle Maginot*. There were also persons represented around whom spontaneous poltergeist-type physical phenomena took place (*Mary Jobson*, *Eleonore Zugun*), and individuals presenting various phenomena in a religious context (the *Curé d'Ars*, *Therese Neumann*).

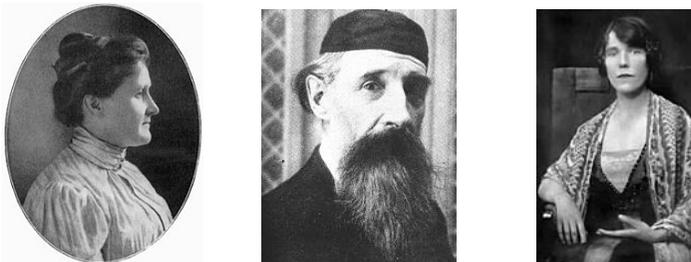


Figure 8. Leonora Piper, Pascal Forthuny, and Gladys Osborne Leonard (left to right).

To his credit, Fodor also included entries about lesser-known individuals, although it may be argued that they were better-known at the time he was writing and in the places they lived. Some examples

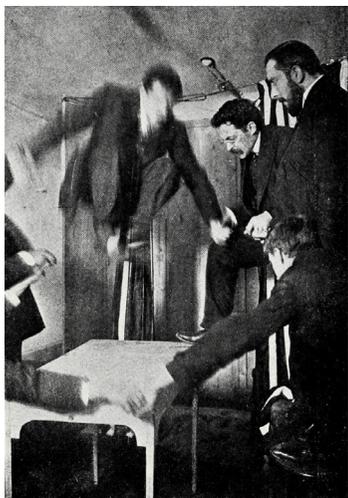


Figure 9. Levitation of Zuccarini.

were Mme. Andrade, George Aubert, Kathleen Barkel, Countess Castelwitch, Vincent N. Turvey, Adelma Vay, Abby Warner, Bessie Williams, M. A. Williams, and Amedee Zuccarini. The latter was reported to produce physical phenomena such as his own levitation, which was photographed. The result gave the impression that the medium was jumping when the photo was taken (Patrizi, 1907). Patrizi stated that in one of the photos (Figure 9) the curtain provided a background “to the ascent of our Zuccarini; no less than a meter

away from the mediumistic cabinet, and both feet are visibly projected forward” (p. 545). The figure of the medium, he stated, was clumsy and unattractive.

A few entries were about the movements of *Mesmerism*, *Spiritualism*, and *Psychical Research*. The discussion about *Spiritualism* had sections about the phenomena of the movement, *Spiritualism* and religion, and short overviews of its history in various countries. Fodor commented about overviews of *Spiritualism*:

The earliest work on the history of spiritualism was E. W. Capron's *Modern Spiritualism*, Boston, 1855. Historical sketches were given in Henry Spicer's *Sights and Sounds*, London, 1853. William Howitt's *The History of the Supernatural*, London, 1863, traces the antecedents of spiritualism in past ages, Emma Hardinge's *Modern American Spiritualism*, New York, 1869, records twenty years' history. Her *Nineteenth Century Miracles*, Manchester, 1883, widened the scope to international scale. The foremost historian is Frank Podmore. His *Modern Spiritualism*, London, 1902, is a classical work, though the author's extreme scepticism is its disadvantage. Joseph McCabe's *Spiritualism* is a hostile book written in an effort to discredit the subject. Arthur Hill's *Spiritualism, Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine*, London, 1918, is fragmentary. A. Campbell Holms' *The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy*, London, 1925, deals with the phenomenal and philosophical side alone, Conan Doyle's *History of Spiritualism*, London, 1926, is comprehensive but loose in concept

and unpunctilious, Carrington's *The Story of Psychic Science*, 1931, is a lucid study of the whole range of spiritualism and psychical research. (p. 366)

I agree with Fodor's praise of Podmore's (1902) two-volume work, even when we consider the latter's ultra-skeptical attitudes, which are sometimes justified. The book is still impressive on account of its wide coverage of relevant topics, and its attention to many important phenomena, individuals, ideas, and investigations. It is divided into four general parts covering the antecedents of Spiritualism, developments in the United States, developments in England, and the topic of mediumship. The first section, "The Pedigree of Spiritualism," covers such topics as possession and witchcraft, poltergeists, sympathetic magic, mesmerism, and the activities of Andrew Jackson Davis.

The literature about beliefs and observations related to Spiritualism and psychic phenomena before the nineteenth century is not limited to William Howitt's useful well-known study *The History of the Supernatural* (1863), a book mentioned by Fodor. It also includes many other informative books. One of them, mentioned in a later entry by Fodor (p. 386), is August Friedrich Ludwig's *Geschichte der okkultistischen (metapsychischen) Forschung von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (1922), a book that surveyed topics such as the ideas of Aristotle, the Neoplatonists, the Pythagoreans, and the medieval Arabic philosophers and mystics. Furthermore, readers may want to consult publications such as *Storia dello Spiritismo* (Baudi di Vesme, 1896–1897), *Los Espíritus* (Otero Acevedo, 1893), and *Le Spiritisme dans la Bible* (Stecki, 1869).¹⁰ Another important book, unfortunately forgotten by many in parapsychology today, and actually mentioned in the entry about *Louis Figuier*, is this science writer's *Histoire du Merveilleux dans des Temps Moderns* (Figuier, 1860). This skeptically-oriented book has four volumes covering such topics as the Loudun possessions, the convulsionnaires of Saint-Médard, Protestant prophets, the dowsing rod, animal magnetism, turning tables, and mediumship. The point of the book, wrote the author in the last volume was that "the love of the marvelous, innate to the nature of man, varies little in its manifestations, and that, from ancient times to the present day, the forms under which it has occurred, are, basically, few, despite their apparent diversity"

(Figuier, 1860, Vol. 4, p. 375). Figuier felt that if he was able to bring back to reason those confused by the deceptive illusion of an ill-conceived mysticism common during his century, he would have reward enough for his efforts.¹¹

There were entries about organizations such as *Boston Society for Psychic Research*, *British College of Psychic Science*, *Institute Général Psychologique*, *Institut Métapsychique International*, *Society for Psychical Research*, and *Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures*. Another example was:

AMERICAN PSYCHICAL INSTITUTE AND LABORATORY, organised in New York in 1920 by Dr. Hereward Carrington for specialised research. It existed for two years. In 1933 it was reorganized and incorporated under 20 W. 58th Street, New York. Carrington became its director, his wife, Marie Sweet Carrington, Secretary. A long list of scientific men of international repute make up the advisory council. The Institute publishes *Bulletins*. (p. 2)

Fodor also discusses devices and instruments such as: *Biometer of Baraduc*, *Communigraph*, *Dynamistograph*, *Ouija Board*, *Psychic Telephone*, and *Sthenometer*. The latter was an instrument invented by French physician Paul Joire to measure the exteriorization of nervous force from the human body, a topic covered as well in *Emanations*. It was described by Fodor as follows:

In the centre of the horizontal dial, marked out in 360 degrees, is a light needle or pointer, mostly of straw, balanced by a pivot on a glass support. The whole is covered with a glass shade. When the extended fingers of one's hand are brought at right angles to the pointer, near the shade without touching it, after a few seconds, in the majority of cases, a decided movement of the pointer takes place, it being attracted towards the hand. (p. 369) (see Figure 10)

Fodor rightly pointed out that some “attributed the movement of the needle to the action of radiating heat” (p. 369). But in addition to this it is important to remember that Joire (1905) believed he had evidence that the action on the instrument's needle reflected the person's health, which in turn affected the nervous system from which the nervous force was believed to be projected. So, in the case of neurasthenia, he wrote:

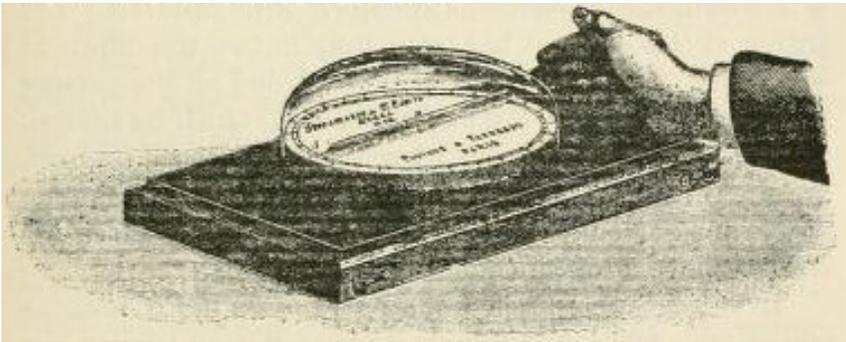


Figure 10. Paul Joire's Sthenometer.

The fundamental characteristic . . . which we shall find in all patients afflicted with neurasthenia, is the complete reversal of the force externalised, which is shown by the fact that the deviation obtained with the left hand is greater than that given by the right, which is diametrically the reverse of the normal condition. (Joire, 1905, p. 222)¹²

Furthermore, Fodor listed several journals and magazines, among them *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, *Annali dello Spiritismo*, *Annals of Psychological Science*, *Banner of Light*, *Borderland*, *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, *Light*, *Luce e Ombra*, *Occult Review*, *Psychic Science*, *Psychische Studien*, *Revue Métapsychique*, *Rivista di Studi Psicici*, *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, and *Zoist* (see Figure 11). He also presented lists of the titles of articles published in the *Bulletin* of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, the *Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*, and the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*.

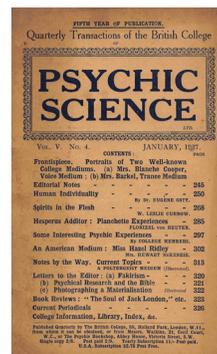
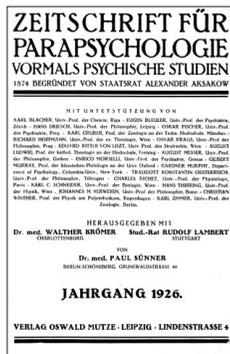


Figure 11. *Light*, *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, and *Psychic Science*.

The *Encyclopaedia* also included entries about *Spheres*, *Survival*, and *Summerland*. In a discussion of *Communication* Fodor commented on mediumistic communications. He included topics such as “The Play of the Subconscious—Deceiving Spirits” (pp. 51–52), and “The Personal Character—Difficulties and Complications of Communications” (p. 52). The latter topic reminds me of James H. Hyslop’s (1919, Chapter 10) discussion of what he referred to as the pictographic process in mediumistic communications. Hyslop postulated that “the communicator manages to elicit in the living subject a sensory phantasm of his thoughts, representing, but not necessarily directly corresponding to, the reality” (p. 111). Spontaneous marginal imagery, and association of ideas, could introduce errors in communication, particularly, Hyslop argued, when a deceased individual communicated via a spirit control. Those familiar with the mentation produced by Gladys Osborne Leonard (Thomas, 1928), will remember the importance of imagery in her mediumistic communications.

The issue of fraud also received attention. This was discussed in entries about mediums, such as *Charles Eldred* and *William Eglinton*, among others. Regarding Eldred’s materializations, Fodor wrote:

A cavity was found in the back part of the chair on which he was sitting and they found in it, after the seance, a collapsible dummy head of stockinette with a flesh-coloured mask, six pieces of white China silk, containing in all thirteen yards, etc. (p. 122) (see Figure 12)¹³

But there was also an entry about *Fraud*. According to Fodor fraud “is now fairly well understood and guarded against” (p. 148). Unfortunately, previous and later discussions of fraud show the issue is not as simple as Fodor stated. For one, the possible existence of unconscious fraud mentioned in the entry (pp. 149–150), and proposed by many (e.g., Ochorowicz, 1896), has not been universally accepted and many times there is no clear evidence to accept the argument in specific cases. In addition, there has been a tendency to ignore or minimize fraud in some circles, showing that apparent clear exposures of fraud can be as controversial as the phenomena that was supposedly simulated.¹⁴

In the same entry about fraud, Fodor reminded us of the various precautions used to control physical mediums:

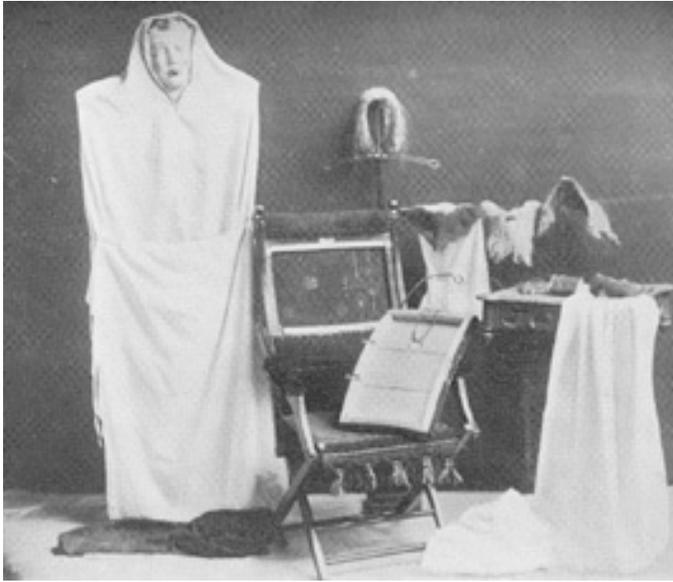


Figure 12. Materials used to fake materializations found inside Charles Eldred's chair.

Wooden sleeves and pants were tied on the Davenport Brothers in Bangor, U.S.A., Politi was brought before the psychical research society of Milan in a woolen sack, Mme. d'Esperance, Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb were meshed in nets like fish to prevent masquerading during their seances of materialisation, Miss Florence Cook was closed into an electric circuit, Bailey was shut in a cage with mosquito netting in Australia, Eusapia Paladino was tied by Prof. Morselli to the couch with a thick, broad band of surgical tape, the kind used in asylums to fasten down maniacs . . . (p. 148)²⁵

SOME CRITIQUES

Much praised at the time it appeared (Ballanff, 1934; De Brath, 1934), the *Encyclopaedia* is, without doubt, a very useful reference work to obtain information about psychical research and Spiritualism before 1933. In fact, to this day, it remains a unique and valuable tool for bibliographical research. As stated before, the book "is likely for many years to come to be of great assistance to students of psychical research, especially to those who use the work primarily as a means of increasing their information by consulting the original sources" (Salter, 1934, p. 207).

However, the *Encyclopaedia* has a few problems, as pointed out by others (e.g., Barbanell, 1934; Battersby, 1934). Typical of the critical approach of the Society for Psychical Research, William H. Salter (1934) commented in the Society's journal that Fodor's work presented several instances of uncritical coverage consisting of lack of mention of suspicious circumstances surrounding phenomena produced by some mediums. It is true that coverage could have been more critical in various instances. But this also shows, as I mentioned before, the subjectivity of many evaluations regarding fraud in mediumship characteristic of the spiritualistic and psychical research literatures. In any case Salter's advice about using the encyclopedia to obtain the original sources is a sound one, and one that should be applied to *any* secondary source of information.

Fodor provided references for many of his entries, but this was done in an inconsistent way. For example, some entries had a list of publications at the end, as seen in the 39 books listed at the end of the entry about *Apparitions*. Others had references embedded in the content of the entry, as in the one about *Apports*.

While useful, the references tended to be incomplete, and make the work of tracing the source difficult, but not impossible. This is particularly the case with journal and magazine articles. One of the worst examples is "Bird pointed out in a letter to *Light* . . ." (p. 398).

Less problematic references, but still incomplete, are: "*Luce e Ombra*, August–October, 1927" (p. 11), *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, June, 1932" (p. 44), "*The Spiritualist* of March 22, 1878" (p. 119), "*Pall Mall Gazette* (May 5, 1868)" (p. 137), "In 1898 Professor James wrote in the *Psychological Review*" (p. 284), and "In *Proceedings*, Vol. XXIX, Mrs. Verrall reviews . . ." (p. 385). However, my critiques should be seen in the context of the style used for references in the old days, which is quite different from current practices.

But the worst problem is that there are no references for many statements and quotes. A few examples of this include information referring to Angelo Brofferio about a writing medium (p. 22), William J. Crawford's suicide (p. 69), the exposure of William Eglinton (p. 119), Frederic W. H. Myers on deception (p. 149), a test of Mrs. Cannock (p. 318), and J. B. Ferguson on phenomena produced by the Davenport Brothers (p. 392). Similarly, the entry about *Emanations* lacked references

to Fodor's mentions of the work or opinions of individuals such as Louis Darget, Louis Favre, Julian Ochorowicz, Oliver Lodge, Joseph Maxwell, E. K. Müller, Charles Richet, and Charles Russ, among others. As stated by a reviewer of the *Encyclopaedia*: "Some further bibliographies we would have welcomed" (Battersby, 1934, p. 57).

Other problems with the *Encyclopedia* are the lack of precise information in some entries. I found that the entries about *Ernesto Bozzano*, *Hans Driesch*, *Carl du Prel*, *Gustave Geley*, and *Enrico Morselli* were lacking information about the methods and conceptual approaches followed by these men in their studies of psychic phenomena. For example, regarding Morselli it was stated that his "psycho-dynamic theory of materialisation phenomena is a compromise between psychological orthodoxy and the spirit theory" (p. 247), but there was no clear explanation of the content of the actual theory, nor of Morselli's (1908) views about the pathology of mediumship (see also Alvarado, 2018). The issue is clearer in Fodor's entry about materialization phenomena (p. 218).

Although Fodor mentioned Gustave Geley's nonmaterialistic approach, he did not discuss that Geley thought that the very existence of some phenomena showed evidence for non-physical causation. For example, Geley (1922) affirmed that ideoplasticity in materialization phenomena established the "omnipotence of the Idea and its preponderance over the matter it organizes, which it shapes and conditions!" (p. 32). This was a negation of materialist assumptions because: "The idea can no longer be considered as a product or a secretion of matter" (p. 33).

A similar lack of information limited the entry *International Congress of Psychical Research* to say, "periodical gathering of psychical researchers from all over the world" (p. 185). In addition to the exchange of information via the presentation of papers, the congresses were an attempt to improve the field, to professionalize it, as seen in suggestions to develop a standard terminology and an international bibliography (Anonymous, 1923).

Another example of incomplete coverage included the mention in the entry about *Hypnotism* of "three classical states" shown by the hypnotized, namely catalepsy, lethargy, and somnambulism. It is correct to refer to these "states" as classic due to their defense by

physicians at the Salpêtrière (e.g., Charcot, 1882), writings that were very influential during the last part of the nineteenth century. But the issue was not that simple. Even some of Charcot's followers argued that the states could vary depending on the type of person used in experiments and the hypnotic induction procedures used, and that there could be intermediate states (Binet & Féré, 1887, Chapter 6). But Fodor did not mention this, nor that there were many differences of opinion about the variety of hypnotic states proposed during the nineteenth century by individuals such as Edmund Gurney (1884) and Pierre Janet (1886), showing that the topic was a controversial one.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Fodor's *Encyclopaedia* presents information about many things that illustrate the pre-1930s interest and study of psychic phenomena, such as mental and physical mediumship. He has given us a view of the past in easy-to-read entries that will increase our knowledge of the old days of psychical research and related topics, and more important, a guide to access some of the publications that are the building blocks of the knowledge accumulated about psychical research.

The work will be particularly useful for the modern student if it is used as a first step to obtain a general background on the subject and as the means to find some of the necessary primary sources to go more in depth on the topic. When readers do this, they may reach different conclusions from those of Fodor, something that is not unique to this work, but that may be the case with other reference works. Some may feel, as I have on occasion, that Fodor could have qualified more of the evidential claims of the phenomena he describes. However, we must remember that his purpose was basically to allow readers to be exposed to the ideas and reports present in the psychic literature, a job he did well. In Fodor's own words presented in the Introduction to the *Encyclopaedia*:

To the facts of psychical research, by the exercise of great care, I added, from books and periodicals, many strange accounts which seem to rest on good authority though, from the experimental viewpoint, wanting in evidential value. For only by so doing could I hope to illuminate the full domain of this coming science. (p. xxix)

As a consequence, Fodor provided us with a wide canvas that has proved to be very valuable in presenting the claims and ideas that characterized psychical research before the *Encyclopaedia* was published. This canvas is also useful in comparing psychical research, past and present. An impressionistic comparison of Fodor's work with the work presented in conventions of the Parapsychological Association, and research reported in publications such as the *Journal of Parapsychology* and the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, shows that currently the experimental approach is more prominent than the study of cases and of the mediumship that predominated when the *Encyclopaedia* was published (which in many cases commented on by Fodor were purely observational and not always controlled). Today there is a tendency to focus on ESP, while there was more variety of phenomena before, including topics that are frequently neglected today but mentioned by Fodor such as apports, levitations, materializations, and xenoglossy. Currently statistics are frequently used to assess the existence of psychic phenomena and their relationship to other variables. My computer-assisted count of the words "statistical" and "statistics" in the *Encyclopaedia* showed five uses of the first word, and two of the second, and all of them referred to simple counts of cases or of features of phenomena.

Today, there is more interest and investigation of cases of reincarnation and near-death experiences than in previous years. Furthermore, regarding the social aspects related to the individuals involved in research, today there are more examples of university affiliations and scientific academic credentials than in the old days, suggesting more professionalization.

Oliver Lodge (1932) stated just before the *Encyclopaedia* was published that "enquiry has led us in many directions which at present are puzzling, because we have not yet the clue" (p. 74). We may not have the clue today in terms of actual explanations of psychic phenomena, but we have better evidence than we had when the *Encyclopaedia* was published, particularly in terms of ESP experiments.

Unfortunately, and as seen in the years covered by Fodor, the field still lacks acceptance by science at large. Worse than this, the phenomena are seen by some to be impossible facts the existence of which can be dismissed on the basis of current beliefs in physical and

psychological processes that are said to be enough to assure us that the data presented by parapsychologists are irrelevant (Reber & Alcock, 2020). This last comment illustrates the unfortunate practice of some scientists who neglect data in support of a claim, and instead follow their feelings and beliefs. This practice highlights the subjective aspects of both past and current science.¹⁶ For writers like Reber and Alcock, the personal belief they espouse is resistant to empirical explorations of the topic, and does not take into account that “orthodoxy constantly changes its outlook, and the folly of one generation is liable to become the commonplace of another” (Lodge, 1932, p. 71; see also Braude, 2019).

In any case, the problem will not be solved by paying attention to a book that is now more than eight decades old. But the perspective this reference work gives us reminds us of the efforts that a relatively small and underfunded community has made in the past, and continue to make today, to expand the scope of science. Thus, in charting the past, the *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* also helps us to obtain perspective today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Nancy L. Zingrone and Michael Nahm for useful suggestions for the improvement of this paper. Massimo Biondi and Andreas Sommer provided me with useful information.

NOTES

- ¹ Other works similar in content were those compiled by Bosc (1891–1892) and Encausse (1892). Grässe (1843) listed many pre-nineteenth century books and pamphlets about animal magnetism, apparitions, demonology, divination, dowsing, dreams, lycanthropy, magic, miracles, and visions. Abbot (1864) compiled sources about the nature, origin, and destiny of the soul, which included a short section about Spiritualism (pp. 866–868).
- ² See Crabtree (1988), Morgan (1950), Ravaldini et al. (n.d.), and Zorab (1957). A few examples of other relevant works are those of Anderson (2006), Goss (1979), and several of my short bibliographical essays (e.g., Alvarado 2010b, 2010c). Also useful are catalogs about the holdings of libraries (e.g., Besterman, 1927, Price, 1929). I have avoided here

the mention of useful non-psychic bibliographical tools such as the *Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office*, and the *Psychological Index*.

- ³ Some histories published before the *Encyclopaedia* also provide the interested student with much information (e.g., Tischner, 1924; Podmore, 1902). For a bibliography of later books and articles about the histories of psychical research and related matters see Alvarado (2019a, Appendix F).
- ⁴ The *Encyclopaedia* has been reprinted several times, such as the 1966 edition updated by Leslie Shepard (Fodor, 1966). An updated edition of Fodor's work has also been published together with Spence's (1920) encyclopedia (Melton, 2001). I should also mention encyclopedias that appeared after Fodor's, limiting my list to just a few, such as Berger and Berger (1991) and Dèttore's (1978) multi-volume work. Stein (1996) presented a skeptical approach, and Cavendish (1970) and Lara (1977) combined psychical research with occultism and other topics. The latter one, an eight-volume compilation, actually had little of interest regarding psychical research. For example, at least 90% of the entries of the third volume were about topics such as alchemy, dreams (non-psychic), Rosicrucians, secret sects, Templars, theosophy, and yoga. Perhaps the best of the modern works is the online *Psi Encyclopedia*, a project sponsored by the Society for Psychical Research that is still growing (McLuhan, n.d.; for comments about this important project, see Alvarado, 2019d).
- ⁵ On Flournoy's (1900) analyses, extended in an article (Flournoy, 1901), see Maraldi and Alvarado (2018).
- ⁶ Fodor published many short articles in *Light*. Some of those published the year he became part of the magazine's editorial staff (1933) were about precognition, luminous phenomena, apparitions, and invisibility (see, respectively, Fodor, 1933a, 1933b, 1933c, 1933d).
- ⁷ There were also many articles in magazines and journals such as *American Imago*, *International Journal of Parapsychology*, *Journal of Clinical Psychopathology*, *Modern Mystic*, *Prediction*, *Psychiatric Quarterly*, *Psychic Science*, and *Tomorrow* (Fodor, 1933e, 1936, 1937, 1942, 1945b, 1948, 1957, 1961).

- ⁸ Before this, Hereward Carrington had speculated about poltergeists as caused by a force projected by the human body, a process related to puberty and sexual development. “It would almost seem as though these energies, instead of taking their normal course, were somehow turned into another channel, and externalized beyond the limits of the body” (Carrington, 1922, p. 60).
- ⁹ Fodor did not refer to the above-mentioned publications in German in his *Encyclopaedia* entry about poltergeists. Psychoanalyst Alfred Winterstein (1926b) considered that some poltergeist phenomena resembled the productions of the unconscious mind in dreams and neurotic symptoms due to “their symbolic nature and other peculiarities that suggest the mechanisms of condensation and displacement” (p. 549), and that they were an attempt to dissipate a fixed idea (p. 551). In physician Albert Freiherr von Schrenck-Notzing’s (1928) opinion, poltergeists could take “the place of a neurosis” (p. 518) due to the presence of “unconscious drives in the hysterical psyche” (p. 519). For another author, nervous diseases physician Jan Simsa (1931), stone-throwing phenomena were related to conflicts caused by sexual dynamics, and were “alleviations of psychic tension, explosions of accumulated energy . . . expressions of the inner, unconscious, dreamlike and primitive mental activity” (p. 573). The journal also published general discussions about psychic phenomena and psychoanalysis (e.g., Kröner, 1926; Winterstein, 1930), including one about a haunting apparition (Sichler, 1927).
- ¹⁰ The treatises of other authors focused on more specific topics. These include August Bouché-Leclercq’s (1879–1882) four-volume *Histoire de la Divination dans l’Antiquité* and Aubin Gauthier’s *Histoire du Somnambulisme chez Tous les Peuples, sous les Noms Divers d’Extases, Songes, Oracles et Visions* (1842), a book that, in addition to magnetic somnambulism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, covered ideas and events from antiquity and the Middle Ages about divination, dreams, ecstasy, possession, prophecy, and visions.
- ¹¹ In a later book, Figuier (1871/1872) accepted that human beings survived bodily death and developed a pantheistic view of the universe.

- ¹² Baraduc (1893) had reported before with an instrument he devised to detect the vital force that medical problems were reflected in the measurements he took. The idea that our exteriorized nervous force can reflect pathology was present in various occult literatures (e.g., Leadbeater, 1902), as well as in the mesmeric one (Alvarado, 2019b). Many instruments were used to detect forces in different ways before the appearance of the *Encyclopaedia* (Bonnamy, 1908; Carrington, n.d.). A common critique, and one applied to the movement of the sthenometer's needle (mentioned by Fodor), was the effect of heat, which caused some controversy (Joire, 1907, 1908; Stratton, 1907; Stratton & Phillips, 1906) because Joire believed he had controlled for this artifact.
- ¹³ On this exposure of fraud, see A. Wallace (1906).
- ¹⁴ The theoretical discourse of some spiritualists was very resistant to exposures of fraud. An example is the case of materialization medium C. E. Wood. In a séance held in England in 1882, a spirit appeared during a séance who was grabbed by a sitter and found to be the medium "with her dress off, and covered with muslin, part of which was secured" (Catling, 1882, p. 410). In later correspondence in *Light*, the medium, and several others, claimed her innocence using arguments common in the discussion of similar previous instances such as spirit-produced unconscious personation by the medium. It was also proposed that since a materialized form comes from the vital force of the medium it sometimes happens that the form that is held becomes the medium when she is transferred outside the mediumistic cabinet due to the shock of being held and to the supposition that most of the medium's vital force was already projected into the séance room to form a materialized figure (Wood et al., 1882). This last idea has been discussed by others as well (e.g., A. R. Wallace, 1882).
- ¹⁵ This reminds me of the precautions taken by Henry Olcott to keep medium Elizabeth J. Compton from leaving her chair. With the medium's permission, he wrote:

I removed her earrings, and seating her in the chair in the cabinet, fastened her in it by passing some "No. 50" sewing thread

through the perforations in her ears, and sealing the ends to the back of the chair, with sealing-wax, which I stamped with my private signet. I then fastened the chair to the floor, with thread and wax in a secure manner. Observe . . . how impossible it was for her to move an inch from her place: she could not have been more firmly fixed to her seat, if irons had been passed through her flesh, and riveted in the wood. A slight pull would suffice to snap the frail thread, and betray her attempt to cheat. (Olcott, 1875, p. 484)

- ¹⁶ Reber and Alcock's (2020) controversial evaluation of parapsychology may be seen as an extreme example of the obvious fact, supported by modern historical work, that evaluations in science are not always solely dependent on data. Scientific work, and analyses, are affected by social and cultural aspects that contribute in various ways to the production or rejection of knowledge. This includes religious, philosophical, and political beliefs, not to mention commercial interests and personal agendas of different sorts. For one example, among many, see Morus' (2005) study of physics.

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