

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS OF HAUNTINGS AND POLTERGEISTS

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Hauntings and poltergeist are very intricate anomalous phenomena reported in all cultures across the centuries (Goss, 1979). Experiencing, reading or listening to reports of these occurrences can lead us to two kinds of attitudes towards them: either we consider them a mystery or we consider them an enigma. Those who consider them a mystery will in general adopt a supernaturalist approach that seems to explain the phenomena but instead just describes the experiences and their underlying processes as if they were already completely known. Mostly religious, religious-like or pseudo-scientific doctrines are referenced. On the other hand, those who consider haunting and poltergeist reports an enigma are not satisfied with the ready and easily found supernaturalist explanations. Instead, such individuals are eager to solve the enigma. I believe scientific researchers are—or should be—members of the latter group, that is, scientific researchers should be the kind of person who is looking for patterns, clues and permanent answers to the enigma. And we cannot forget that being scientific means being skeptical enough to avoid accepting any 'ready' or 'easy' explanation and flexible enough to avoid imposing dogmatic beliefs about such amazing phenomena or experiences.

Different cultural or social groups often use distinct explanations for haunting and poltergeist occurrences. In Brazil, for instance, places considered haunted or the known sites of poltergeist-like events are popularly called 'mal-assombrados'. Especially in the countryside, hauntings and poltergeists may be attributed to the action of folkloric characters who act according to the beliefs of the region where they were originated. Several physical occurrences similar to those reported in poltergeist cases are attributed to *Saci Pererê*, a kind of Brazilian goblin who lives in the forests and loves bothering people and animals on the farms. Other spectral figures are thought to be people who have not followed the laws of the Catholic Church and were cursed, condemned to walk endlessly on nights when the moon is full (e.g., *Lobisomem* and *Mula-Sem-Cabeça*, a priest and his lover, respectively). Others (e.g., *Mão de Cabelo*, *Alma de Gato*) are entities whose forms are not exactly defined and whose purpose is to scare

people, especially children who don't behave well (Casudo, 1947/2002). In Brazilian urban areas, interpretations of poltergeist and haunting occurrences are more often related to the belief in the existence of spirits of disembodied people who are acting out or who have just come back from 'the other world' to leave a message; Kardecian spiritism and African-Brazilian mediumistic religions promote this view. Another interpretation is offered by Pentecostal Churches who believe poltergeists and hauntings are related to the supposed action of the devil in our world. So, in each culture or group we can find specific explanations and very particular agents put forth as the cause of these anomalous occurrences (Machado, 2003).

Many representatives of mainstream science commonly consider reports of hauntings and poltergeists to be fictional accounts, psychopathological symptoms or the result of misinterpretation of reality due to ignorance about naturally occurring psychological, chemical or physical processes. But fortunately there are other scientists and researchers who pay attention to human experiences, and consider them crucial for the construction and revelation of reality. So there are researchers who have paid attention to what people have reported for centuries and instead of denying it or adopting a ready answer to it, they are working to try to solve the enigma of so-called anomalous experiences, of which hauntings and poltergeists form a part. Briefly, then, we can say that explanations for hauntings and poltergeists range from postulating that they are the result of:

- (a) fraud (e.g., Kurtz, 1985; Randi, 1995);
- (b) misinterpretation of reality (e.g., Gardner, 1985);
- (c) psychopathology (e.g., Zusne & Jones, 1982);
- (d) supernatural causes (e.g., Andrade, 1988; Kardec, 1857/1944a);
- (e) anomalous environmental interactions such as possible psychokinetic and/or extrasensory experiences (e.g., Bender, 1976; Rogo, 1986; Roll, 1978; Houran & Lange, 2001; Mackenzie, 1982; among many others).

Poltergeist and haunting case collections show that these kinds of anomalous experiences have patterns that give us clues about their connection to the living human beings involved in the cases. Through observation of these patterns it has been possible to design

experimental studies in order to try to discover objectively what mechanism is involved in the occurrences. Among these studies are psychological and socio-cultural profiling of the experiencers, and other possible interdisciplinary routes into the interpretation of such personal experiences. Field investigation becomes very important for the development of experimental research and laboratory experimentation has begun to provide a controlled setting in which to check elements of those phenomena that occur spontaneously in daily life. So, we cannot close our eyes to what field investigations have shown us and have still to show to us. We cannot think that we already know all the features of the phenomena. We have to be conscious that we still have something to learn because we certainly do not have all the answers as yet.

The purpose of this paper is to point out what we already know about hauntings and poltergeists through field investigations, what are the main questions that remain without answers, and what may be done in the future to improve research procedures and to elevate the discussion of the data that has been collected so far. First of all, however, it is important to conceptualize the terms *haunting* and *poltergeist* more clearly and to review how such terms have been used by researchers.

*Reviewing the Concepts*¹

In general terms, according to the patterns observed from field investigations, the fundamental difference between hauntings and poltergeists is that poltergeists are directly related to people and hauntings are directly related to places (Carrington & Fodor, 1953). However we could say that this is a didactical distinction because we cannot precisely classify all reported cases. To illustrate this I could say that, when I was selecting cases for my doctoral dissertation in which I analyzed the function and meaning of poltergeists (Machado, 2003), I faced the following problem: some reports that seemed to me to refer clearly to typical poltergeist cases were classified by the authors/researchers as haunting cases or as a mix of poltergeist and

¹ This material is strongly based on the comments I have presented in my doctoral dissertation (Machado, 2003), in the third chapter of which I talk about the criteria to select the poltergeist cases that would compose the *corpus* to be analyzed.

haunting phenomena. Many libraries, such as those of the Society for Psychical Research and the College of Psychic Studies include poltergeists and hauntings in the same catalog entry. In fact, there is no consensus among researchers about how to differentiate these phenomena one from the other. The frontiers between hauntings and poltergeists seem to have the same distorted contour that extrasensory and psychokinetic experiences seem to have in general, which is not surprising considering that ESP and PK must form the base of haunting and poltergeist experiences.

Etymologically, *haunting* refers to the repeated apparition or sense of presence of something in a specific locale. Hauntings may be visual (in the majority of the reported cases), auditory or olfactory. In the visual cases, for example, people report having seen a ghost doing the same things in the same place but at different times. Haunting phenomena has been reported as persisting over years, decades, or even centuries.

Poltergeists, on the other hand, can last 'just' some hours, days, months or years, although reports of phenomena that persist for years are quite uncommon. Poltergeists are intimately related to specific individuals, a point that will be explored in more detail later when the review of literature is presented. The word *poltergeist* has a German origin: *polter* means playful or noisy, and *geist* means spirit or mind. Popularly, people seem to prefer adopting the meaning *spirit* instead of *mind* in this case, because it corroborates the belief that *poltergeist* phenomena are caused by an external agent, not by people who live or work together, for instance. Poltergeist phenomena consist of physical occurrences that seem not to obey established physical laws. Based on the reports of field investigations, we can list the following phenomena which are reported to occur spontaneously and recurrently: movement or breakage of objects; a fall of stones inside a house or building, damaging or not damaging the building itself; appearance of fire or water; problems with electrical appliances; lights turning on and off; sudden changes of temperature; currents of air where there is no open window or door, or any other device that could provoke such a current; appearance of excrement or soil in food; and/or other weird observable physical events related to personal belongings or specific objects. The term 'poltergeist' was popularized during the Protestant Reformation especially by Martin Luther who used the term consistently to refer to phenomena similar to those listed above. People believed—and many

still believe—that such occurrences were provoked by the devil or by disembodied spirits (Machado, 2003; Roll, 1977).

The term was re-introduced in England by the writer Catherine Crowe, with the publication of her classic text *The Nightside of Nature*, in 1848, and since then it was used by psychical researchers at the end of the 19th century, when the term was popularized by Frank Podmore (Goss, 1979). Ironically Podmore, who was a great writer, popularized the use of the term poltergeist through his works related to this topic in which he made it clear that he did not believe that such events were supernatural nor that they resulted from some extra-motor origin. Instead he believed that they were the fruit of frauds, misinterpretations or hallucinations (Podmore, 1896a, 1986b).

Among academic researchers, such phenomena have formally received another term: 'recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis' (RSPK). The term was coined based on evidence of the involvement of living agents in the process of the anomalous physical events reported. As I pointed out in another article:

...psychokinesis refers to a mental action on the environment (from Greek, psyche = mind; kinesis = movement); recurrent refers to the fact that the events are typically repeated for an undefined period of time; and spontaneous because, up to now, it has not been possible to discover any way either to control or predict the occurrences.

(Machado, 2001, p. 228)

The term RSPK first appeared in the report of the Seaford Case published by J. Gaither Pratt and William G. Roll in the *Journal of Parapsychology* in 1958, but it was coined by Roll and elaborated on in his later work. Even with this more precise, less theory-laden term in the literature, the label poltergeist is still more frequently used by researchers, as can be seen in specialized literature on the topic.

It is common to consider poltergeists as a kind of haunting case due to the belief that poltergeist events are caused by disembodied spirits or entities. The term 'infestation' is also used to describe both phenomena, due to the interpretation that specific locations may be infested by spirits or entities responsible for poltergeist and/or haunting events.

In addition to differentiate between hauntings and poltergeists based on the connection of the reported events to places or people, there is another criterion by which to distinguish them, although, in my opinion, it is very weak: that is, the type of occurrences. For example,

anomalous physical events that do not involve apparitions of ghosts would be characterized as poltergeist phenomena and anomalous physical events that did include ghostly apparitions would then be considered a haunting case. According to this criterion some cases are designated as of the haunt-RSPK type, which means that such cases would be composed of ghostly apparitions as well as objective anomalous physical events of the poltergeist type. (e.g., Roll & Tringale, 1982)

Another approach that has been used to differentiate hauntings and poltergeists was suggested by Charles Tart:

Haunting and poltergeist cases are of particular interest insofar as they seem to share these apparent (and spectacular) PK phenomena. But hauntings are traditionally associated with the belief that some aspect of a human personality which has survived death is responsible for them, while poltergeist cases seem to be generally associated to the living agent.

(Tart, 1965: 190)

This perspective is very controversial because it touches on the delicate question of survival after death: hauntings would refer to that part of human beings that might survive physical death and might reveal or bring back information from the past. The ESP hypothesis, however, provides a possible naturalistic explanation for hauntings. That is, living human beings could have the capacity of capturing information from the past, translating it into materialized images, sounds or smells and thus bringing the content of the information to the consciousness in some hallucinatory way, as has been proposed by both G. N. M. Tyrrell (1942/1973) and Louisa Rhine (1965).

From my point of view, hauntings and poltergeists can present similar events. I agree that what differentiates them is the evidence for connection of the anomalous events to living people—which, if present, would fit the case into the poltergeist category—or the evidence for connection to specific places—which, if present, would fit the case into the haunting category. In any case, as I have said before, this is a 'didactical' choice that is important when it serves to orient research and organize reports.

Terminology and concepts adopted to refer to the experiences are not just minor details. But it cannot be forgotten that defining terminology does not mean having ready answers to cases or experiences before a detailed case investigation is done. In Brazil, it is

a serious problem, this notion that having a term means having an explanation. I bet that in other parts of the world this confusion also happens. It is important to consider the patterns, but it is also extremely important to be open to what spontaneous cases themselves have to show to us. If we do not do approach the features of the cases with an eye uncompromised by an easy term, we jeopardize the possibility of learning more from field investigations.

What Have We Learned About Haunting Features Up To Now?

Hauntings reported since Antiquity show that experiences involving ghosts and apparitions are a part of everyday human life (Finucane, 2001). Such bizarre experiences have supported—and continue to support—religious beliefs and doctrines. The presence of hauntings in everyday life is also reflected in cultural constructions in entertainment such as in film and television, for example (Edwards, 2001).

Only in the 19th century did scientific research of haunting phenomena start to be organized. The foundation of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in London in 1882 formally marked the beginning of organized investigations, but some independent researchers, such as William Crookes, William Barrett, Frederic Myers, among others, had already dedicated themselves to the study of haunting and apparitional cases and other kinds of phenomena such as those surrounding so-called mediums (Beloff, 1993; Fantoni, 1981). The SPR began to establish protocols for field investigation and experimental studies, the results of which were disseminated through specialized publications, research meetings and seminars (Broughton, 1991).

Two of the most important contributions of the SPR in that period were two surveys of spontaneous cases published in 1886 and 1894: the first resulted in the two-volume *Phantasms of the Living* by Gurney, Myers and Podmore (1896/1970), which focused on apparitions of the living; the second, called the *Census of Hallucinations* (Sidgwick, Johnson, Myers & Sidgwick, 1894), “focused on cases in which a dying or deceased person manifest[ed] to a percipient” (McClenon, 2001, p. 64). In the *Census* 9.9% of the respondents (1,684 out of 17,000 people) reported that type of hallucination.

Since the SPR was founded, other societies, foundations and research groups have been established so as to investigate formally psi phenomena in general. These newer institutions have paid at least some

attention to spontaneous cases and conducted or supported field investigations. As examples, we could mention the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) founded in 1885, the Institut Métapsychique International (IMI) founded in 1919, the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) founded in 1950, the Parapsychology Foundation (PF), founded in 1951, and the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man (FRNM), today the Rhine Research Center, founded in 1965.

More recent surveys have shown that a good portion of the general population reports have had a haunting experience at least once (Fox, 1992; Greeley, 1975; Haraldsson, 1985; Palmer, 1979). What follows are some examples of the percentages of people who have reported having had contact with dead. In the USA 42% of the respondents to a 1984 national survey said 'yes' to a question about having had contact with dead; a national survey conducted in 1990 found that 9% reported they had seen or been in the presence of a ghost (Gallup & Newport, 1991), and 14% reported they had been in a haunted house (McClenon, 2001). Ten percent of the respondents of a survey conducted with students of Tsukuba University in Japan and 40% of the students surveyed at three colleges in the People's Republic of China have admitted they have had contact with dead (McClenon, 1994). In a survey conducted at a university in São Paulo in Brazil, 62% of a sample of 181 students reported they had seen an apparition; 14% of them reported they had been in a house they believed was haunted and 17% reported they had had a poltergeist experience (Zangari & Machado, 1996). The prevalence of such experiences in daily life makes field investigation worthwhile. However, even though haunting cases happen more commonly than many people imagine, it is not easy to conduct haunting field investigations especially because it is difficult to separate subjective impressions from objective phenomena. This kind of investigation depends strongly on human testimony and we all know how easily testimony is compromised by personal and cultural beliefs. However, the fallibility of testimony has not impeded important objective observations that have helped to develop and improve experimental studies on this topic (e.g., Radin & Rebman, 1996).

If we confine ourselves to what has been observed in field investigations of hauntings, and set aside what has been popularized by the movies, ghosts are not fluid floating creatures that terrify children and adults. Ghosts can seem very solid and real, have a three-dimensional form, can be seen in the mirror, not pass through walls,

and, in most cases, seem to ignore those who are observing them, just repeating the same acts over and over. If the haunting is confined to sounds and smells, they are repeatedly perceived by different people at specific moments during the day or at night.

There is a notable difference between what we call apparitions and what is classically called hauntings. Apparitions, unlike classical hauntings described above, are perceived by specific individuals and the sounds heard or, more commonly, the images seen are very familiar to the experiencer (Mackenzie, 1982). Apparitions of relatives or friends usually announce a death, or the arrival of the person depicted in the near future, or even help to get information about documents that were considered lost but were important for the person or persons who see the apparition. So, apparitions can be experienced collectively or can be a personal experience that only happens once (Machado & Zangari, 1996; Rhine, 1965).

The belief that apparitions and especially ghosts pass through walls is probably due to the fact that spectral figures can disappear by fading out, giving the impression that they have gone elsewhere without 'using the door'. Reports say that ghosts and apparitions seem to be very real especially because they behave as if they were a living person in the environment, looking through windows, using the doors to get in or to get out of rooms, climbing up or going down stairs etc., as reported, for example, in the Cheltenham case investigation (Morton, 1892).

Based on the reports sent to the Society for Psychical Research, Tyrrell (1942/1973) classified apparitions into four categories. His work was later reviewed by Andrew Mackenzie (1982) and corroborated by other researchers and their case collections:

- (1) *experimental apparitions*, apparitions of persons who were purposely trying to appear in front of a distant person, a phenomenon that can be related to out-of-body experiences (Hart & Ella, 1953-56; Green, 1968; Irwin, 1994);
- (2) *crisis-apparitions*, in which the person depicted by the apparition is someone who is in the midst of a crisis and may be asking for help (Rhine, 1948);
- (3) *apparitions after death*, that is, an apparition of a person who has already died (Rhine, 1948);
- (4) *ghost apparitions*, that is apparitions of a spectral figure seen at the same location on different occasions (Irwin, 1994).

Evans (2001) presented another term to classify the variety of ghosts that are reported: (a) *apparent*, referring to the individual whose ghost is ostensibly perceived by the witness; (b) *haunter*, referring to a ghost perceived as haunting a locality or, more rarely, a person; (c) *image*, referring to what the percipient perceives; (d) *projectee*, referring to the individual who is ostensibly projected in astral projection and is seen in another place by witnesses; and (e) *revenant*, referring to a ghost who is ostensibly returning from the dead. Such a classification is very controversial especially because it deals with the ontological problem of whether a ghost has an objective existence and also implies the survival question.

From the end of the 1940s to the beginning of the 1950s, Louisa Rhine selected, analyzed and classified 996 spontaneous case reports among those that had been sent to the Duke University Parapsychology Laboratory. She published her case collection in 1965, in a book titled *Hidden Channels of the Mind*, in which she compiled and analyzed spontaneous case reports. Louisa Rhine's work was instrumental especially for investigations on apparitions. Cases described served as a guide to the classification of different kinds of experiences in which extrasensory perception—and even psychokinetic—abilities seemed to be operating in daily life. So, Louisa Rhine did not intend to prove the existence of psi with her phenomenological study, but her objective was to detect features of spontaneous psi experiences. From this work we learned that: (a) emotional connection between people facilitates psi experiences, especially extrasensory ones; (b) relaxation, sleep or monotonous motor activities facilitate ESP experiences, which have high incidence in dreams; (c) crisis situations, especially tragic ones are the main context in which the reported cases take place; (d) personality influences the incidence of extrasensory experiences; (e) the four forms in which information gathered through extrasensory means are manifested are realistic dreams, non-realistic dreams, hallucinatory and intuitive experiences; and (f) apparently there is no significant distinction between the number of men and women who experience psi, even though it appears that more women submit reports.

For almost three decades (1920s-1940s) parapsychological studies were especially devoted to laboratory research. The case collection mentioned above was really important because it has reinforced the importance of field investigation. Field investigations of hauntings and apparitions continue to be conducted in the forms of observational research, surveys and case investigations *in locu*, case collections and

analysis of reported cases (e.g., Alvarado & Zingrone, 1995; Hufford, 2001; Haight, 1979; Haraldsson, 2006; Haraldsson & Houtkooper, 1991; Houran & Range, 2001; Maher, 2000; Maher & Hansen, 1995; McClenon, 1981; McHarg, 1973; Moss & Schmeidler, 1968; Rogo, 1978; Roll & Brittain, 1986; Roll, Maher & Brown, 1992; Roll & Nichols, 1999; Rosenberg, 1974). Field investigations *in locu* in particular have been improving with the utilization of newly developed technological devices that measure physical alterations at the places where haunting phenomena are said to occur in order to try to answer the question 'Do apparitions or ghosts have an objective nature?' New data has been collected and they have brought new information about the objective aspects of haunting phenomena. This latter point will be explored in more detail in another section, in which objective aspects of hauntings investigated in the field—including poltergeist-like occurrences—are presented.

What Have We Learned About Poltergeist Features Up To Now?

Poltergeists have also been reported since Antiquity. Carrington and Fodor (1951/1953) presented a case collection that included reports of poltergeist occurrences going back to 355 B.C. In the specialized and non-specialized literature it is possible to find several reports about mystics, saints and sorcery victims who were involved with poltergeist-like occurrences. Reports were published by such early members of the SPR as Barrett (1911), Lang (1903), and Podmore (1896a, 1896b). Reports were also written by ASPR members among them Hyslop (1913), and by other researchers such as Bayless (1967, 1984), Bender (1969, 1976), Betty (1984, 1985, 1986), Bononcini and Martelli (1983), Cox (1961), Eeman (1986), Eisler (1975), Flammarion (1924/1980); Fodor (1958, 1959), Gregory (1982), Hasting (1978), Lombroso (1906, 1909); Nichols (2000), Price (1926, 1933, 1945), Rogo (1974, 1979, 1986, 1979/1995) and Roll (1968, 1972, 1977, 1978), Pratt & Roll (1971), among others. In Brazil, we do not have a solid tradition of poltergeist phenomena research, but there are a few who are interested in the subject and have written about it and/or presented and analyzed some cases, among them Andrade (1988), Carvalho (1991, 1992), Friderichs (1980), Lima (1994), Machado (2001), Machado & Zangari (1995, 1998, 2000), and Tinoco (1989).

Until the 18th century, people believed that poltergeists were provoked by spiritual entities, fairies, witches and demons. From the

17th century on there were some reports of a few elementary field investigations (Alvarado, 1983). By that time, very little importance was given to the physical occurrences themselves. The cases reported were used to discuss religious questions, so what mattered was combating sorcery, diabolic possession and people's involvement with disembodied spirits.

In the 18th and 19th century, the decline of witchcraft, the development of mesmerism, and the expansion of the Spiritist doctrine proposed by Allan Kardec in France, among other factors, resulted in the organization of a more scientific approach to poltergeists—even though religious and superstitious explanations for the phenomena were always available (Machado, 1996; Martínez-Taboas, 1993). Various cases were described and published during the period. In the 19th century, the most famous case is the Fox Family case in 1848 (Lewis, 1848), although the classification of this as a poltergeist case is controversial. The Fox Family case was fundamental for the organized establishment of Spiritualist and Spiritist practices and doctrines. The case and others like it were also investigated by scientific committees who made systematic evaluations and conducted interviews about the weird physical phenomena that were reported. Researchers have spent days in the houses where the physical events were said to occur to try to observe them and to control the environment to the extent that fraud could be detected or ruled out. So, in the 19th century we had two kinds of interpretations of poltergeist phenomena: the naturalist and the supernaturalist. Interpretations that could be considered supernaturalist, especially those arising from Spiritism or Spiritualism, attributed poltergeist occurrences to the spirits of dead people or to non-human elemental beings (Flammarion, 1924/1980). On the other hand, naturalist interpretations were based on the scientific method and sought to find natural explanations for poltergeist phenomena (Fantoni, 1981).

For some 19th and early 20th century researchers, poltergeists were nothing more than fraud. Hyslop (1913), for example, proposed that poltergeists could result from unconscious human activity during a period of dissociation that could lead someone to commit fraud without their conscious awareness. In field investigations, however, some researchers observed that even though many cases were found to have fraudulent elements, there were at least some cases that seemed to be the result of anomalous environment interactions. Theories were proposed to try to explain such anomalous interactions and

experimental studies were planned to test whether mind could really influence matter.

Poltergeist field investigations have shown that poltergeist occurrences seem to be related especially to the presence of a specific person who lives, works or frequents the locale of the events. Such a person has been called the 'epicenter' of the case as if he/she was the center of the turmoil. It is really not good manners to refer to the focus person in this way. The term epicenter has a very negative meaning: people who are labeled in this way can feel socially stigmatized. David Hess (1988) prefers to call the central person of these cases the 'focus person', but the majority of researchers in this area have not adopted the term. Since the 1990s, the term most commonly used to denote the central person in a poltergeist case is 'agent'. This term expresses more clearly what seems to be the participation of an individual in the occurrences, instead of characterizing the agent as a victim as the term Hess suggested does. In my doctoral dissertation, I used the term 'protagonist' instead of agent, once I worked on the reports as narratives and considered the occurrences and their context as elements in a history. I was looking for coherence in this history through the connection of meaning that was brought to light by the signs inherent in the reports and the objective facts observed by their witnesses (Machado, 2003). Another reason I preferred the term protagonist instead of agent was because I considered poltergeists to be experiential facts, and the term protagonist is more neutral than agent, since I was not discussing the reality of the psychokinetic phenomena or the role of any kind of physical force that might be involved in the occurrences. This approach has helped me to demonstrate that fraudulent and genuine cases follow the same semiotic logic, a finding that emphasizes the importance of investigating and reporting cases even if they are fraudulent, because they can help us to understand the key that unlocks the utility of this kind of communication—that is, considering the poltergeist manifestation as a symbolic or metaphorical language allows us to view its features as an alternative for verbal expression (Machado, 2003).

Because of the observed correlation between the presence of living human beings and poltergeist occurrences, the 20th century has been marked by psycho-dynamic speculations and interpretations of poltergeist phenomena based on the tenets of psychology and psychoanalysis. This shift in emphasis has influenced field investigation approach and procedures in a remarkable way.

Carrington (1922) has proposed that poltergeists may be produced by a kind of energy that irradiated from the body of the agent during adolescence. He postulated that poltergeist occurrences may be connected to the expression or liberation of sexual or hormonal forces. This is an interesting hypothesis, but field investigation reports and case collections show that individuals at other stages of life than adolescence can be poltergeist agents, even though there does seem to be a tendency for a higher incidence of adolescents at the center of such disturbances. As McClennon (2001: 65) has summarized:

William G. Roll (1977) analyzed texts describing 116 poltergeist cases.... Of the 116 cases, 92 seemed associated with a particular person (occasionally two persons).... Of the 92 'person-centered' cases, 56 involved females and 36 males. Ages of poltergeist 'agent' (the person around whom the activities seemed to occur) ranged from 8 to 78. There was no significant difference in average or median age of agents from era to era (female average = 15; male average = 17; median age = 13).

A tendency cannot be considered a rule, however. Unfortunately in Brazil, for instance, there are some so-called poltergeist investigators who arrive at the site where poltergeist phenomena are said to be occurring with ready answers. They look immediately for an adolescent in the group of experients and without careful investigation identify the poor guy as the one responsible for the occurrences—although generally the poor guy is a girl because it is believed that women are more likely to provoke this kind of manifestation. Such a quick judgement can be disastrous for the adolescent and for the whole family. And it can 'spoil' the case to the extent that the possibility of a serious and fruitful investigation is wasted (Machado & Zangari, 2000).

In the 1930s, poltergeist case investigations started to include testing supposed poltergeist agents for psychic ability. No significant results were found (Alvarado, 1983). Researchers also started to do physiological studies to verify whether the supposed agents had any kind of organic problems, but again nothing significant was found. By that time parapsychological research in general was focused on experimental studies and spontaneous case investigations were seen as being less valuable to the field as a whole than experiments.

In the report of a case investigation, Nandor Fodor (1948) made it clear that by that time, the person who would later be called an agent was then considered to be a victim of a kind of undesirable guest, not

exactly independent of the focus person, but rather something produced by a psychopathology. From a psychoanalytic point of view, and referring to a case he was investigating, Fodor (1959, p. 92) said:

... [that this was the] first poltergeist case in which, through the psychoanalytic approach, the poltergeist was banished and the victim's health and sanity were saved.

In the 1920s, psychoanalysis had already been used in a very rudimentary way by Countess Wassilko in her investigation of the Zugun Case (Mulacz, 1999; Rosenbusch, 1927). But in contrast to Fodor, Countess Wassilko was interested in discovering the causes of phenomena that occurred with or were provoked by Eleonore Zugun. She was not interested in extinguishing them, as Fodor was reported to have done.

In 1988, David Hess presented a paper at the 31st Parapsychological Association Convention in Montreal, Canada, in which he analyzed the efficiency of interventions used to stop poltergeist occurrences. Even though he considered poltergeist and haunting phenomena to be idioms of suffering, anxiety and affliction, Hess criticized the action of Fodor as a psychoanalyst in the case that occurred in 1938 because, as Hess (1988, p. 279) said:

...to some extent Fodor may have short-circuited the interpretative process by telling the patient what the disturbances meant rather than let her work this out by free association.... in this case he operated more as an oracle than an interpreter, and there is no evidence that he worked with her associations to the phenomena. Nevertheless, his canny interpretation of the meaning of the six-month period preceding the onset showed that he was able to help the woman interpret the meaning of at least one aspect of her affliction, and in relating the disturbances to her inner psychological conflicts he was able to bring about an end to the disturbances.

This brings us to an ethical question that field researchers have to face: if you have a poltergeist case to investigate, do you hope that the physical events last long enough to be analyzed or do you try to help the people involved calm down and—as we already know given the pattern of past cases—probably make the occurrences stop?

In the 1940s, John Layard (1944) proposed formally that poltergeists could provide “a covert form of release, and thus curative

function, for repressed conflicts” (cited in Rush, 1987, p. 63). Still in the 1940s, two events enhanced the interest of researchers in poltergeist field investigations: (1) the publication of significant results from psychokinetic dice experiments that suggested the possibility of mental influence over matter (Rhine & Rhine, 1943); and (2) the interest of the Duke University Parapsychology Laboratory in spontaneous case studies as sources of insight for the design of future experiments, as mentioned previously. The hypothesis of living human involvement in the production of poltergeist occurrences gained force. And it became so strong that it has become almost a ready answer to future cases.

Renewal of interest in poltergeist cases especially in the 1950s has contributed to the development of a protocol for field investigation. Diagrams of the buildings where the disturbances occurred were done, the trajectory of objects or the places affected were marked and measured, reports on the position of each person in the house at the time of occurrences happened were made, psychological tests were administered to the agents and eventually to those with whom they lived (Roll, 1969, 1970). These methodologies allowed researchers to uncover the focusing effect: that is, in poltergeist cases, occurrences can be focused on “particular objects, on types of objects, and on areas, such as a room or a shelf” (Roll, 1977, p. 390). This new era of poltergeist investigation was inaugurated by the famous Seaford case investigated in 1958 by J. Gaither Pratt and William Roll.

Roll was the first researcher who presented systematic reports of results of psychological tests—especially projective ones, such as the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)—given to supposed poltergeist agents and to other people involved in the cases he investigated (Alvarado, 1993). The results of the tests, confirmed by Hastings (1978) among other researchers, showed that the poltergeist or RSPK agents were unable to tolerate frustration, had almost no ability to face daily problems efficiently, repressed both hostility and aggressiveness, and had difficulty expressing these negative emotions verbally. The use of psychological tests was reinforced by the psychopathological approach to poltergeist cases and vice-versa. This approach to poltergeist cases was established, a position that arose out of the work of Fodor (1948, 1958), Layard (1944) and Owen (1964), among others. However, only rarely were poltergeists related to severe pathological syndromes such as schizophrenia, for example. The hypothesis that poltergeist events functioned as the exteriorization of inner problems with the relief and expression of tensions became even

stronger because field investigation reports presented evidence that the supposed agents were passing through difficult moments in their lives at the time of the poltergeist occurrences. In the case report on the Seaford poltergeist, Roll began systematically to use the term RSPK to denote poltergeist cases.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Rogo emphasized the possibility of adopting therapeutic approaches to stop poltergeist manifestations such as verbalization of tensions as in a group therapy (e.g., Rogo 1974). He proposed that the agent of a poltergeist case has a collective nature, by which he meant that the manifestations were the fruit of a context created by a group, not by a single person (Rogo, 1979, 1982). Rogo was also open to the possibility that spiritual entities could provoke poltergeists (Rogo, 1979/1995).

Before Rogo, Stevenson (1972) had already proposed the classification of poltergeist manifestations into two categories: those provoked by human agents and those provoked by disembodied agents. These ideas were reinforced by a few field investigations in which the researchers could not identify an agent or central person (Cornell & Gauld, 1960; Osis & McCormick, 1982; Pierce, 1973; Stevenson, 1972) or when the supposed agent or focus person was absent (Roll, 1970, 1976) during an occurrence. It is possible that these cases need more investigation before we can talk about the non-existence of a living agent. And even if there is some evidence of the effect of distance on the magnitude of anomalous physical events that occur with certain objects closer to or farther from the supposed agent, it is important to remember that psi does not seem to obey known physical laws. So, we cannot predict how psychokinesis would work in every poltergeist case.

The psychodynamic model of poltergeists has persisted until today even though it has been criticized (Alvarado, 1993; Martínez-Taboas, 1977; Martínez-Taboas & Alvarado, 1981). The criticisms are due to doubts about the fragility of projective test results (Gittelman-Klein, 1978; O'Leary & Johnson, 1979).

In addition to psychological tests, Roll also included physiological tests of the agents in his field investigations in order to determine whether physiological differences could explain the fact that some people become poltergeist agents and some do not. His studies in this sense are especially related to disturbances in the central nervous system, more specifically to epilepsy, something that has also been investigated by other researchers (McHarg, 1973; Pratt & Palmer,

1976; Roll, 1978, 2000; Solfvin & Roll, 1976; Thatcher, 1910). However, correlating poltergeist manifestations to problems in the central nervous system is still speculative (Alvarado, 1993; Martínez-Taboas, 1984).

As happened in haunting field investigation, the development of technology has improved poltergeist field research. In the next section I will discuss how technological advances have been incorporated into field investigation as well as review what else we have learned from haunting and poltergeist research.

Application of Instrumentation in Field Investigation of Hauntings and Poltergeists

As we have seen, up to the 1950s, field investigations of hauntings and poltergeists consisted mainly of qualitative studies accomplished through observational and survey methods (Harte, Hollinshead & Black, 1996). Schmeidler (1966) introduced quantitative statistical analyses of adjective checklists and floor plans to field investigations. This approach was further improved with the use of instrumentation in haunting and poltergeist research.

The development of technology has enhanced field investigation because it provides us with a potential means of understanding physical aspects involved in haunting and poltergeist phenomena (Houran, Lange & Black, 1996; Tart, 1965). Serious discussion of the use of instrumentation in field investigations began in the mid 1950s. Researchers such as Hans Bender and William Roll began to use devices to detect vibrations, electrostatic energy, sounds, temperature changes, and so on at poltergeist and/or haunting sites.

As pointed out by Harte, Hollinshead and Black (1996), several instruments have been used in field investigation: still and motion-picture photography with various types of film media, including infrared film (e.g., Bender, 1969; Karger & Zicha, 1968; Maher & Hansen, 1992; Maher & Schmeidler, 1975; Rosenberg, 1974; Taff & Gaynor, 1976; Uphoff & Uphoff, 1984); thermal sensors (e.g., Andrews, 1977); devices to measure geological and/or meteorological conditions (e.g., Dingwall & Hall, 1958; Osis, 1982; Persinger & Cameron, 1996; Randall & Randall, 1991); tape-recorders equipped or not with specialized microphones, parabolic dishes or diodes to capture subsonic and ultrasonic frequencies (e.g., Hövelmann, 1982; Pratt & Palmer, 1976); such devices for psycho-physiological measurements as

portable transistor electroencephalograms—telemetric units—(e.g., Solfvin & Roll, 1976), as well as those that can measure heart rate, respiration, or galvanic skin response (Hart, Black & Hollinshead, 1999); magnetometers (e.g., Radin & Roll, 1994, 1996; Roll, Sheehan, Persinger & Glass, 1996); radiation detectors such as the Geiger counter (e.g., Maher & Schmeidler, 1975); computers, such as a diode-based computerized random number generator (e.g., Maher & Hansen, 1992); and a multi-energy sensor array called MESA, that is, “a portable computerized multi-energy sensor array... [which] can facilitate the task by permitting one researcher instead of a group of investigators to operate the multiple sensors and collect EMF data” (Harte, Hollinshead & Black, 1996).

The use of instrumentation to collect and analyze physical data in field investigations has improved our objective knowledge about haunting and poltergeist episodes. As Harte, Hollinshead and Black (1996) have summarized so well:

There is now an accumulating body of evidence alleging that known, conventional physical energies may be mediating or allegedly causing hauntings and poltergeist-like episodes. These energies include ionizing radiation (Devereux, 1990; Radin & Roll, 1994; Roll, 1994; Roney-Dougal, 1991), geomagnetic activity (Gearhart & Persinger, 1986; Persinger, 1981, 1985, 1988, 1993; Persinger & Cameron, 1986; Persinger & Lafreniere, 1977; Persinger & Richards, 1995; Randall & Randall, 1991) and localized electromagnetic and electrostatic fields (Cook & Persinger, 1997; Green, Parks, Guyer, Fahrion & Coyne, 1992; Persinger 1975; Radin & Roll, 1994, 1996; Roll, Sheehan, Persinger & Glass, 1996; Shalis, 1989). Persinger contends that extreme or unusual forms of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) can directly influence the physical environment (Persinger & Cameron, 1986; Persinger & Lafreniere, 1977) and the psychophysiological functioning of those who are exposed (Cook & Persinger, 1997; Persinger, 1988, 1993; Persinger & Cameron, 1986).

Surveys of and observations at haunting or poltergeist sites must be complemented by specialized devices as well as by other physical and psycho-physiological measurement instruments that have been developed and will be developed in the future. Keeping an eye on technology development is an important step in finding new ways of

collecting and correlating data in order to create new experimental designs.

Collaborating with psychics in field investigations

In addition to technological devices, some researchers such as Roll and Schmeidler have included collaboration with psychics, especially during on-site field investigations of hauntings. This methodological step is controversial. Although some interesting results regarding the subjective aspects of cases have been presented, collaborating with psychics has not contributed objective evidence by which we may understand the mechanisms involved in haunting and poltergeist phenomena. Psychics are supposed to capture information about the locale of anomalous occurrences no matter what their personal religious beliefs. Their impressions can then be tested against objective data obtained from instrumentation used on site (Moss & Schmeidler, 1968; Radin & Roll, 1994). What seems to be important in this situation is to try to use mediumship ability as a kind of bridge between the past and the present, and between the non-directly-observable data in the environment and the researchers.

Persistent questions and possible ways to answer them

Even though we have a good range of knowledge about poltergeists and hauntings, there are still important questions that remain unanswered. We already have a considerable number of clues and hypotheses about these phenomena that are really important because they offer some access to these anomalous occurrences and because they provide us with an incentive to continue looking for answers. Solving the questions raised by hauntings and poltergeists is important because psi experiences are part of everyday life as surveys and case collections have shown. So, it is worthwhile to invest time, money and efforts to improve our knowledge about these phenomena.

Among all the non-answered questions about hauntings and poltergeists the most intriguing ones may be: 'What do they mean?' and 'What is their function in our daily life?' As psi researchers we cannot forget these questions. Context is fundamental to our future research. Unfortunately, however, even though the psychodynamic view of poltergeists has been influential, I have noticed, for instance,

based on what I have read since I started to do research in this area, that many published reports on field investigations are still centered on the physical aspects of the disturbances. This same emphasis is even more visible in reports of field investigation of hauntings. It is true that evidence shows that hauntings are connected to places, but we cannot forget that people report these experiences. So, research cannot be limited to the history of the place or to physical measurements taken at the haunted site. Instead the individuals who experience hauntings should be considered even if a key element of each case is its fundamental relationship to the location. So, symbolic aspects involved in the cases must be considered seriously, and in many cases such aspects are ignored. When the context—including symbolic aspects—of poltergeist and haunting occurrences are not explored, we can lose very important data, especially considering that, even though such spontaneous experiences happen more frequently than is usually imagined, they do not happen every day.

As Alvarado (2002) argues, we need a balanced integration between research directed at proof and research directed at process. Emphasis on the extremes is not good, and anyone can see that while we have a considerable number of field investigations of poltergeists and hauntings, the emphasis of our field is on experimental research. Experimental research is extremely important, but being devoted only to experiments keeps us from understanding the magnitude of psi in daily life. On the other hand, we cannot restrict our research work to the compilation of cases.

Some of us can argue that there are not so many field investigations of hauntings and poltergeists because they are not easily available for study. This is true. But maybe we should pay more attention to less visible, less extreme psi experiences like apparitions, ESP dreams reports and isolated psychokinetic experiences. Such occurrences are not as pronounced or exciting as classical poltergeist and haunting occurrences, but they must have the same components and mechanisms of psi in them. By paying attention to these 'smaller' phenomena, we may be more able to assess the robust cases when these come along.

Another point to be considered is the importance of fraudulent cases. In terms of meaning—and again, symbolic aspects of these cases are important—fraudulent poltergeist and haunting cases seem to have the same function as seemingly genuine cases. As I have demonstrated (Machado, 2003), in terms of context the study of fraudulent cases can be very fruitful, in that they allow us to evaluate or reflect upon the

reasons that make someone 'choose' psi-like events to get what they want or to express their feelings or needs. In addition, it is important to remember that some cases may contain a mixture of consciously or unconsciously produced fraudulent events and apparently genuine psi events (e.g., Roll, 1969).

It is a fact that we still do not have a definitive answer to the questions about the reality of anomalous environmental interactions involved in hauntings and poltergeists. Despite all the evidence—and some of it is really strong—we still do not have the scientific proof we need. In any case, because hauntings and poltergeists are perceived or can be caused by people, another intriguing question to ask is why does not everybody have these kinds of experiences? Even though we have psychological and physiological measures of agents or percipients, it is true that we have not uncovered variables that differentiate those who have never had such experiences from those who have. So 'What makes the difference?' remains an open question. And the same thing is true when we think about the structure of specific situations: context can be very similar in ordinary conflict situations and in poltergeist cases, in the sense that context may be intimately connected to conflict or may even make conflicts meaningful. So, what is the specific role of context in poltergeist cases? And what is its importance in haunting cases?

Even the use of sophisticated technological devices in contemporary field research cannot provide answers to questions related to objective aspects of the phenomena. We already know that there is a correlation between environmental forces (electromagnetic fields, for example) and the incidence of haunting and poltergeist phenomena. But why do such poltergeists and hauntings occur in some places and not in other ones where environmental measurements are the same? We cannot answer that question yet. It is necessary to do more field investigations in which we consider both subjective and objective aspects of the phenomena. Real interdisciplinary work is needed. There seems to be an intersection among social, psychological, physiological and environmental aspects that we have not been able to detect yet, possibly because we have not integrated our differing research methodologies to the extent that we could have done. It is interesting to think about the possibility of special training for integrated field research, about establishing an interdisciplinary protocol that would guide all future scientific research on hauntings and poltergeists. Because we are talking about 'spontaneous' cases here and because nature is not

obliged to limit itself to our established protocols—even if we carefully develop a methodological protocol from our deepest understanding of what has been observed in field investigations conducted up to now—such protocol would still need to be evaluated periodically by peer-researchers for adjustments and improvements. And it would be important to tie experimental research to future investigation of spontaneous cases. Experimentation would complement field observations and measurements as well as provide us with more interesting data about the human beings involved in the cases. A network of field investigation could also be created to bring together researchers from different areas and perspectives that are dedicated to spontaneous case research, but also committed to the idea of using experimental procedures to test individual experiencers in the cases that are investigated. In addition to changing ideas about what constitutes research and how best to develop methodology further, the network could work as one possible avenue for the sharing of technology to investigate the physical aspects of the cases while maintaining an emphasis on subjective aspects of the phenomena. Such a network could promote increased levels of haunting and poltergeist field investigations while facilitating both the integration of data collected from experimental studies of the experiencers with that obtained from contextual studies of the haunting and poltergeist events as a whole.

Longitudinal studies of experiencers of haunting and poltergeist phenomena could also be done. Instead of abandoning the case when poltergeist occurrences stop or after physical measurements at haunted places have been taken, the network of field investigators could function as an observatory dedicated to following people and places involved in spontaneous cases over a long period of time in order to map subsequent effects of the original spontaneous experiences or even the consequences of fraudulent cases on the perpetrators and others who witnessed or were involved in the original outbreak.

The network of investigators could also help to break through the language barriers from which we all suffer. Reports written in languages other than English are barely read by those who are not native speakers (Alvarado, 1985). Translations and subsequent dissemination of reports originally written in different languages could be shared among and commented on by a wider group of researchers.

A practical question concerning haunting and poltergeist research is how to deal with the obstacles for conducting field investigations. As was pointed out by Machado and Zangari (1998, p. 76):

The main difficulties facing investigators of poltergeist cases are: (1) the difficulties in accessing poltergeist events, because it is more common for a group living with a 'poltergeist situation' to ask for religious help or to call the police than to look for a researcher; (2) the rareness of poltergeist events; (3) the fact that a great part of the investigation depends on fallible human testimony; (4) the involvement of the press who are always looking for amazing headlines, whose actions help to 'contaminate' testimonies and 'spoil' the evidential value of reports of the occurrences; (5) the fact that many psi researchers and many scientists from other disciplines do not think that poltergeist cases are worth studying; (6) the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the names, addresses or events in a poltergeist case so as to protect the lives and privacy of the experiencers even if the evidential value of the case report suffers from the investigator's sense of integrity.

I would say that the investigation of hauntings pass through similar difficulties, and it should also be mentioned, both in poltergeist and haunting case investigations, that the lack of financial resources for the researchers' personal expenses (like transportation, food, accommodation) impacts on his or her ability to investigate the occurrences *in locu*. Similarly the lack of funds to buy and maintain instrumentation also limits the investigator's ability to take measurements on-site. The network of field investigators suggested above could help to solve this problem if it could find grants and aid from other organizations. Other types of difficulties can hardly be avoided. The future protocol of field research could include training for researchers in how to deal with the police, the press and with religious interferences. The rareness of cases is a problem that could also be minimized by the network of field researchers, because members would be spread across the globe and the appearance of any new exciting case could be disseminated quickly. The problems with human testimony and the need to maintain secrecy about the locations in haunting and poltergeist cases, and the anonymity of individual experiencers could be handled by the assignment of pseudonyms or other methods of obscuring details by the network.

The lack of value that field investigations in general and hauntings and poltergeists in particular suffer from is a problem connected to personal beliefs about what is worthwhile in science and also to the conditions under which we do this kind of research. Cases do not

follow a set schedule so we cannot plan a field investigation in advance so as to adhere to funding deadlines or arrange for a research leave from our place of employment. In spite of these difficulties, it is important not only to argue that spontaneous case research is important and must be done, but also to conduct field investigations more effectively in order to add to the body of data that makes up the findings of the field.

One important question persists: Are poltergeists and hauntings provoked exclusively by living human beings or are they provoked by disembodied spirits or entities? As I have already mentioned in this chapter, some researchers entertain the notion that disembodied spirits or entities may be the agents in some cases, especially when a focal person cannot be identified in poltergeist cases and even more so in haunting cases. It is possible however that such cases were interpreted in a supernatural way because of researchers' beliefs and biases. Most of the reports of field investigation of hauntings do not demonstrate—at least not explicitly—any effort to investigate the possible connection between people and their lives to the reported occurrences. Many times, context is neglected, while more importance is given to physical measurements.

This type of emphasis makes field research seem utilitarian: we want to get data in order to know about and get control over a kind of force or capacity we do not yet understand with the simple wish to use the knowledge we gain to develop more technology. Of course it is important to detect and understand this new force if it exists, and of course it is important to continue to improve our technical expertise. But what about the human beings involved in the haunting and poltergeist episodes? I feel sometimes we forget that field investigations of psi phenomena as they are experienced in everyday life can tell us about our nature as human beings, which is part—a big part, I would say—of the enigma called psi.

When I think about the possible involvement of supernatural forces in hauntings and poltergeists, I sincerely do not see how we can determine the plausibility of the spirit hypothesis one way or the other. To give a definitive answer to this question, we need to know the reach of the human mind, the limits of our psi ability if it really exists—and I believe it does. Survival is an interesting topic especially because, as human beings, we are fragile in the face of life and death, but as scientists, I think first of all we have to concentrate our efforts on discovering and understanding human abilities and limitations. Psi is a

promising naturalistic hypothesis that needs more investigation, more exhaustive testing. And we cannot forget that scientific method as it is known now is limited and serves to investigate empirically verifiable hypotheses. The reality or not of the spiritual world, of its influence in our world is not part of the scientific agenda. I am not saying that science denies the possibility of survival or of disembodied entities acting in our daily life. I am saying that science cannot confirm or deny the existence of spirits and/or their action in the world because the spirit hypothesis itself cannot be tested empirically. This fact does not impede researchers who collect reports and study the effects of anomalous experiences on the personal beliefs of the experiencers, but it does mean that the ontological reality of the spiritual world cannot be tested. The testability or not of the spirit hypothesis is a controversial question and it is possible to find different opinions about it in the field.

As I have said before, the fact is that we already know a great deal about hauntings and poltergeists, but there are still many open questions to be answered. Field investigations are worthwhile because they are essential to this task. As Alvarado (2002, p. 117) has said of spontaneous psi research in general:

Our field needs to learn something about the phenomena, not to continue sharing marvelous stories for their own sake. My impression over the years is that a segment of those concerned with the study of spontaneous phenomena are not interested in explaining or understanding the phenomena. They seem to be happy to maintain the mystery for its own sake. In their view, the phenomena are something sacred that should not be probed too much. ... This could be because of religious or spiritual concerns that define the phenomenon as transcendental and beyond the reach of science, or it could be because of fear that if the phenomenon is explained, there will be no more mystery and thus no reason to focus on it. ... Whatever the reason, such attitudes hinder the development of spontaneous case research, leaving the field as little more than the glorification of the parapsychological.

We have a decision to make as a research community: Are we going to contemplate hauntings and poltergeists as astonishing cases or are we going to work together to decipher the enigma that these cases represent? I vote that we improve our collaborative research efforts in order to decipher the enigma.

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