

GENERAL DISCUSSION

DAY ONE

IREDELL: I have nothing really of importance but would like to comment as being probably the person who, apart from her daughter, knew Eileen Garrett for longer years (65 years ago she said that she knew me from before my birth), and she spent many a time in our home. There were aspects in her training by Hewat McKenzie that were very alarming and, if one is not experienced in training and developing the proper medium, there are aspects that would frighten many a would-be medium. One was the subjecting of the medium to experience with "elementals"—if you accept such a thing, as I did—and it is alarming inasmuch as, if the elemental is not extricated at the time of the medium being in trance, it can be transmitted to another person present. This happened in the case of my father, a most gentle person (I don't know if Mrs. Coly remembers him), completely guileless, and in 75 years he was never known to have lost his temper. One of these elementals attached itself from Eileen to my father, who became uncharacteristically temporarily manic, and could only be eliminated by Hewat McKenzie making magnetic passes, which he did over a period of years, I believe, in the training of Eileen. This is just an aspect that might not be known by people who have not had such personal experience.

MICHELS: I'd like to ask Beverly a question. As far as I understood, you attach more or little to the fact that we should not find out how psi happens, why it happens, how it works. You are more or less in favor of experiencing it and looking at it as something beautiful, and trying to prove it, trying to experience it, but do not use the masculine method of researching it, or trying to find out how it works. Why?

RUBIK: No, I do not think that was my point. I was really arguing for a gender balance. I guess what upsets me about the conventional approach, in terms of causality, is that it always looks for a simplistic explanation—a linear chain of events, typically some local contact, what we call locality in physics, a signal in parapsychology, or even information transfer. There is an obsession with the belief in the conventional and hanging onto it in terms of what is unknown. That is usually put forth as explanation or understanding, rather than conceptual

leaps. I certainly would like to see science pursued to gain an understanding of psi. I don't know if we understand it in terms of conventional science or physical causality principles. That was my point. I am not throwing out the so-called masculine stereotypical way of looking. I want some gender balance in science. I think we need to step aside momentarily from these masculine approaches. But we certainly can reexamine them within the context of bringing in gender balance. Until we do that, we have just a very limited way of approaching the subject.

MICHELS: Another point is that you used the term anomaly, and defined it more or less as something that should not occur. What do you mean by "should not occur"? It should not occur according to conventional or orthodox science?

RUBIK: Even researchers in parapsychology use this word. They begin with the premise that mind and matter are separate, and then they say, "Let's look for an interaction." And when they find one, they call it an anomalous phenomenon. In my opinion, that is strange thinking to move from one extreme to the other in concluding it is an anomalous phenomenon. All in the name of trying to build a bridge to conventional science.

MICHELS: Why shouldn't we do that?

RUBIK: We can, but has it worked? No, it has not. That's the point. We've had decades of modern research with this approach, and it has not changed the mainstream opinion one iota.

MICHELS: Don't you think anomaly has a more general meaning?

RUBIK: Yes. I'm a member of the Society for Scientific Exploration, where only anomalies are considered, all types of scientific anomalies. I see a virtue in that viewpoint, but I also think that sometimes we need to take a stronger viewpoint and say, "There's enough evidence that this is no longer an anomaly. This is the nature of reality, and it's anomalous to continue to ignore it."

MICHELS: I see anomaly only as something that we cannot yet explain by some more or less generally accepted way of science or knowledge.

RUBIK: Deep in my heart, I'm saying that I don't believe psi is an anomaly. I think it's our cultural attitude and the split between mind and matter that is within all of us, individually, culturally. At all the levels where we see and feel and think, it is an anomaly. I think other cultures

have thought very differently. Psi would not be so anomalous, for example, in Brazil. I just like the idea of experimenting with shifting our attention to giving up that notion of psi as anomaly and taking it as the norm, holding the deep interconnectedness within nature and mind-matter as a continuum or process. I am looking for new ways of shifting the paradigm. I think if we begin to use different language and shift our thinking as much as possible, just like a thought experiment, and see where that goes, it might lead to a different approach. That was what I was trying to do in my talk.

HÖVELMANN: In addition to the points raised by Hans Michels, there are quite a few other details that I would like to discuss with you. But more importantly, I would like to raise a more general question, because I am still trying to understand what practical consequences the adoption of a more feminine paradigm in parapsychology, or in science on the whole, would be. For instance, as far as I can see, one common element in all of science is that scientists are trying to arrive at a situation where they are able to tell the presence of knowledge from the absence of knowledge. And I am not sure whether adopting a feminine paradigm affects this distinction in any way, and if it does, in which way. That's a question that struck me first when Rhea was talking this morning and then during Ruth's talk. And I'm not sure what your answer would be to that question. I have some answers to that, but I would like to hear yours.

WHITE: Well, I'm not sure I exactly understand the question.

HÖVELMANN: Well, to put it in a nutshell, does the adoption of a feminine paradigm affect the standards by which you apply to accept or reject a scientific sentence, for instance?

WHITE: Well, I think that, in the first place, I don't know that we are talking about a feminist paradigm. I don't think well, Beverly talked about a feminine archetype and ...

HÖVELMANN: She used both terms, and I think you were talking about feminist paradigms.

WHITE: If I was, then it was plural because I feel that what we need are new approaches and I am more interested, at this point really, in research approaches than I am in paradigms, because I don't feel personally at the point where I think there is a feminist paradigm that is going to give us the answers to our questions. As far as I can go in terms of a paradigm would be to come to a complementary view; a view that is

complementary to the androcentric paradigm, which is the one that you are speaking from. And I don't pretend to have reached the point where I could counter it right now, but maybe some of the other people would like to address this question.

HÖVELMANN: I'm not so sure that I am speaking from an androcentric paradigm. What I was going to say is that I am in favor of new approaches; but when I am asked to consider or adopt a new approach, I prefer to have at least some information on where it leads me. That is the background of the question.

WHITE: You mean the criteria that you would use to decide whether something is worth pursuing?

HÖVELMANN: Where is a feminist approach getting us as far as methodology is concerned?

WHITE: I would say that that question is basically part of the androcentric paradigm—Popper is really a part of the paradigm. And I don't think that it has gotten us too far in parapsychology. I don't think we have gotten very far myself. And I, as I said, don't have anything to substitute for it right now, except that I am saying I think this looks like it is worth delving into and that is as far as I can go right now. I have not been able to take the ball any further than that, but it looks to me like there are several approaches, research approaches, that might lead to new types of data. And that the new types of data might be pieces of the puzzle, as I expressed it in my paper, and that connections might be made between these for now very separate sorts of data, and then we might come up with a new kind of paradigm. I don't know.

HÖVELMANN: By which criteria would you decide between useful or meaningful data and meaningless ones? Do you have any idea?

WHITE: I wouldn't start out with ...

HÖVELMANN: Or is this not a sensible question anymore after adopting a feminist approach?

WHITE: Well, that is a good way to put it. If I... Yeah, I don't want it to be a sensible question any more. I'd like to come up with something new. I haven't but, yes, that puts it quite well. I would like to say that that question, or that way, has been around for a long time. I don't think it has gotten us very far, and I think maybe we should try to look for new criteria.

O'DONNELL: I have been listening all day with some interest, and let us start with this word anomaly. The debate about anomaly we have

just heard in the last 10 minutes seems to me confused. Anomaly is a common term in science. It means something unexpected. For example, a granite rock on a limestone cave is an anomaly, a strong one. In geochemistry, there were 10 parts of lead per million in average limestone. You'd need a hundred parts for that to be an anomaly, a weak anomaly. It doesn't mean it's mysterious. It's just unexpected. A long time ago I conducted a novel analysis from the viewpoint of weak anomalies. Now, weak anomalies are very common in, shall we say, oil prospecting. They put together a sign there, and you can argue it is chance, or you can argue that there's something to it. A strong anomaly, .9, you can argue that there might be .1. You would say to drill. And one of the things you're talking about in your approach was an analysis of intuitions from the viewpoint of weak anomalies. If I think of my Aunt Mary and she walks in the door, that's a common one, that would be a weak anomaly. We can classify that as .1. What do we mean by .1? After 10 such incidents maybe in one there might or might not be something. How would you judge that? Just average them or something. On the other hand, if you dreamt of an airplane crashing on your house the next day, and it crashed on the one across the street the next day, that would be a strong anomaly. Are you all with me on this? And when this is done in due scientific manner, one arrives at certain patterns which are quite clear. And the thing is, how shall I put it? I'll have to reference that for a minute. In geochemistry or oil prospecting, things like that, decisions are made that arguably could be called coincidental, decisions where interactions are made. But when one does this, one arrives at a very, very clear pattern about all these spontaneous incidents. And that is as follows: they fall into a single pattern—first you think, then you observe. As distinct from the normal thing of first you observe. And from a long story to a short, we go on from there: I report, I do not claim. There's a difference—one of clear language.

I learned to develop psi at will for many, many hours. I see no reason why no one else cannot learn it, and I think the proof is right under your own nose. And I cannot understand that. I printed these things way back in 1974 in the *Parapsychology Review*. Since then, about 100 people have tried them out and most of them report, yes, you can learn psi. But no one in the formal field has ever tried them out. It's been very interesting, and I've never bothered to persuade them because it's much more interesting to observe. But I believe that in 20 hours anyone here of

average intelligence and some of you could have traces of psi, reproduce it at will. And the whole thing, if that be true, just assume it were for a minute, all these marvelous debates today just don't make sense. They are like... I could paraphrase Winston Churchill, maybe: I never heard so much about so little in my life. I would even teach psi, more or less, to anyone at will. Put more formally, I believe I could predict and in a quantitative fashion prove this in about 40 hours spread over one to two months. I told skeptics, "Try it and see." There are two kinds of proof in science, one is common: Look what is here. But the more general kind of proof is do this and see. So I merely report that what if what I have seen is true, and I'm only saying just imagine if, imagine what all this stuff sounds like. Rather unclear. That's all I have to say. I hope I'm not annoying you. But to get back to anomaly it is something unexpected. It is a common thing.

WHITE: You were asking at lunch about why nobody paid attention to your article, and I think here we get into politics. We get into what is known as discourse, and people have their thoughts going along in a certain trough and it's pretty hard to get them out of it. I think that that is part of the problem. That is part of the problem maybe of what we are talking about in feminist science as well.

O'DONNELL: It's not that I have no particular interest in seeing it proved or anything else. What I'm just drawing your attention to is, these things are there. It is my belief that the reasoning is excellent. I challenge anyone to fault it, starting with an anomaly.

WHITE: We appreciate your telling us about it, but we are about 10 minutes past our time.

HEINZE: Can I say something very briefly? To the first gentleman, I didn't get your name. I will answer your question tomorrow at the end of my paper. I know you had legitimate reasons. Your question is very valid. Where does it lead us and how does it apply? I will try to answer tomorrow. Then you fortunately also brought something up that people can be trained for psi faculties and certainly they can, but I want to lead to something that is a warning in regard to training methods, such as Mrs. Iredell uttered. In America we have all these New Age movements—for example, the Harner Method, which puts people in a state where they access very deep information, wherever it comes from. There is never a warning uttered that you have to be very careful when you are doing this. You need a trained practitioner conducting these

sessions because you are generating energies. You do not know where they come from and do not speculate where they come from. But you have to properly dispel them; that is your responsibility. So I think a warning is absolutely in order: If you train people, you have to be aware that you may generate more than you can handle. And you have to be prepared for it; as a trained psychologist, you need to know how to take care of it.