WOMEN, POWER, AND THE PARANORMAL: A CULTURAL CRITIQUE

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In this paper I address the position of women in the cultural history of psychical research and parapsychology. In so doing, I focus on the negotiation of personal and social power and powerlessness. Power relations are conceptualized in terms of everyday, lived experience. Extreme displays of power are revealed in the course of revolutions and political coups, but domination, resistance, and empowerment are acted out every day in naturally occurring conversations and practice (e.g., Foucault, 1980; Scott, 1985). It is at the level of everyday experience that we may glimpse the pervasiveness of power relations within contemporary society.

By focusing on the analysis of power, I examine ways in which the concepts of gender and "womanhood" are constructed and negotiated through everyday beliefs and practices related to the paranormal. Gender relations are inextricably linked to an interest in psychic phenomena. Stereotypical characterizations of "female" and "male" exist in a tension that can be understood in terms of juxtapositions between subjective and objective realities. This is revealed in psychical research and parapsychology by the interplay of "rational" and "irrational," evidence and belief, control and spontaneity. There is a general subordination of experience, belief, and feeling (stereotypically "female") by abstract and technical knowledge (stereotypically "male"). At the same moment, however, there is resistance to socially constructed categories of "female" identities. This tension will be examined in the context of the paranormal and women who believe in, practice, or carry out psychical research.

PSYCHIC CONSUMER AND BELIEVER

Rationalism has emerged as the dominant paradigm in the 20th-century Western world. Despite this, beliefs in mysticism, occultism,

and the paranormal continue to maintain widespread popularity (e.g., Gallup & Newport, 1991; Greeley, 1987; McGuire with Kantor, 1988). Various surveys reveal that such beliefs are especially strong among women. A particularly interesting, though little known, survey of beliefs in the paranormal was carried out by Gillian Bennett (1987), a folklorist at the University of Sheffield. She conducted personal interviews with 107 middle-class British women, most of them of retirement age. The majority were found to adhere to beliefs in the paranormal, including ESP and spirits. Beliefs in astrology and fortune-telling, on the other hand, were much less popular.

Taken from the perspective of gender and power, Bennett's work is especially useful. In considering the nature of the beliefs she encountered, she notes that social and philosophical issues shape whether women will accept traditions involving the supernatural. Based on the survey, beliefs and attitudes were found to be influenced by considerations of morality and ideals regarding "male" and "female" characteristics. In Bennett's words: "Popular beliefs reflect permitted behavior" (p. 29).

Bennett argues that stereotypical characterizations of women as intuitive, unassertive, gentle, and supportive come into play. One can predict the degree of belief in traditional ideas based on the belief's position on four continua: from intuitive to objective, from unsought to sought, from interpersonal to selfish, and from safe to dangerous. For example, telepathy and premonitions are associated with a high level of belief because they conform to stereotypes of "womanhood" that are held by the primarily retirement-aged informants. They represent forms of intuition that are unsought but that encompass feelings and perceptions of other people. Further, such experiences are seen to support the goodness of God and humankind. Astrology and fortune-telling, according to Bennett, challenge these views. They involve experiences that are sought after actively rather than passively obtained, that are ego centered, and that introduce an unknown element into ordinary experience. According to Bennett:

> It does seem, then, that the acceptability or otherwise of a supernatural tradition depends to a large extent on its morality in the women's eyes, and, in turn, that that morality is dependent on their perception of a woman's "proper" role and persona and their need to see the world as an

> orderly, harmonious sphere for God's goodness and human affection. (p. 31)

In particular, a strong factor that influences women's belief in the supernatural is the reliance on and love for family. Belief in survival enhances the place of these women within a social order that provides for the continuation of loving and supportive relationships, even in the face of bodily death. Bennett uses this system of morality to distinguish believers from disbelievers. Although she does not develop this position, as a folklorist she acknowledges that social factors are important in influencing skeptical womens' adherence to the dominant rationalist tradition. The relatively small number of skeptics in her survey spoke less of family and of their place in a larger social network than did the believers. This does not mean that skeptics are less committed to family or society. It does suggest, however, that less value is placed on traditional "female" qualities in a presentation of self. Of prime importance to these women is the subordination of intuition to a more characteristically "male" view of objectivity and materialism. The coexistence of psychic believers and skeptics reveals the ambiguity inherent in the social construction of "womanhood."

POWER AND THE PSYCHIC PRACTITIONER

Women have a long tradition of ostensible psychic abilities. From the famous oracles of Greece to Joan of Arc, claims of psychic powers have placed women in a paradoxical position within society. On the one hand, control of psychic or magical powers has often been an important means of obtaining social and political power. Bennett (1987) notes that those in her sample who claimed some psychic abilities saw themselves as occupying a special social status that involved membership in a kind of intuitive elite. On the other hand, psychic practitioners are often treated with distrust and overt hostility. We need only think of the many women who were burned at the stake to illustrate this point.

The ambiguities of "womanhood" are clearly illuminated in the context of Spiritualist mediumship. To examine the dynamics of power, mediumship, and gender, we may turn to *The darkened room*, by Alex Owen (1989). In her analysis, Owen considers the role of physical and mental mediums at the turn of the 20th century. She argues that women's

roles as mediums served to circumvent the traditional female role as it was defined in late Victorian England. Spiritualist culture provided an outlet for status, opportunity, and attention that were frequently denied elsewhere. With access to spiritual power, the female voice became one of authority, at least within the confines of the social movement. To obtain this voice, however, the female self was renounced in order to channel the voice of others, frequently male. Like Bennett, Owen observes that the characteristically "passive" female gendered behavior was the very quality that elicited spirit communication.

Activities during the seance call into question the established perceptions of female sexuality, signaling a transposition and transgression of normative femininity and sexual etiquette. When the female medium was transformed into a male spirit, her behavior and language were frequently at odds with the ideal of respectable womanhood. Likewise, the procedures inherent in "scientific" investigations of Spiritualists challenged the accepted range of male/female behaviors. For example, it was not uncommon for mediums to be subjected to rigorous scrutiny in efforts to establish the validity of their claims—indeed, of their constructed identity. In a typical scene, a young woman would be seated in a small cabinet, tied to a chair naked or semi-naked, and subjected to the male gaze of the investigators. Within the context of the seance room, the scientists transgressed as many Victorian norms of gender and class behavior as did the female mediums. Looked at from this perspective, we can see that women were violated both as the objects of investigation and social criticism. While Owen correctly observes that the young mediums were empowered by their purported abilities, the reverse is also true. Many women who used the seance room as a means of gaining power and social mobility had little recourse but to accept the probing hands and eyes of their male counterparts.

Although it provided some challenge to the dominant construction of gender, Owen argues that radical Spiritualism accomplished this without mounting a direct attack on the status quo: "Spiritualism had the potential, not always consciously realized, for subversion" (p. 4). In spite of this, Spiritualist mediumship is best characterized as being comprised of a powerless/powerful duality. As a vessel for the spirits, women allowed themselves to be controlled and manipulated. On the

other hand, the séance room was an arena in which the medium could play out her refusal of fixed gender behavior and meanings.

Taken from another perspective, we can turn to the work of Eileen Garrett to explore further the power relations inherent in mediumship. Garrett was a popular mental medium during the early- to mid-20th century. Her time was divided between the United States and Europe. Unlike the Victorian Spiritualists, Garrett did not adopt a religious attitude toward psychic experiences. Instead, she approached the meaning of mediumship through objective inquiry. She worked with the leading researchers of the time, engaging in studies of automatic writing, altered states of consciousness, ESP, and spontaneous psi during trance sittings (Pleasants, 1964). In an effort to stimulate impartial scientific inquiry, she established a small grants program for research through the Parapsychology Foundation in 1951 (Coly, 1987).

Garrett's active role in research designed to explore her reputed abilities is important in the context of power relations. On one hand, her interest in scientific studies was based on her personal experiences. However, such experiences were subordinated by her efforts to subject them to reality testing through rationalist procedures. Although she made herself a guinea pig for experimentation, Garrett's daughter, Eileen Coly (1987, p. 49), notes that Garrett's "ambition became to find the people who were willing to do the experiments and the research, to find the money, and to create a respectable organization that would sponsor such work." The goal was to move "psychical research out of the seance rooms, out of all this mushy, rather murky atmosphere, and put . . . it into a respectable, clean, research laboratory atmosphere" (p. 50). By her actions, Garrett provided a challenge to the traditional subject/object dichotomy. Although she remained the object of a primarily male gaze, she charted her destiny and her involvement in the research. By controlling the use of her abilities, she was able to subvert the overt domination of her subjective experience.

THE PSI RESEARCHER

Like believers and psychics, female psi researchers represent both an affirmation of and a challenge to the dominant ideology of "womanhood" in Western society. Parapsychology, like other behavioral sciences, has

attempted to follow in the footsteps of natural science. Here the emphasis is on stereotypical "male" traits of control, objectivity, depersonalization, abstraction, and authority (Keller, 1985; Merchant, 1980). Women have largely adopted this perspective as researchers or they have been relegated to subordinate positions within the field. To illustrate these points, we will examine the perspectives of several females in the history of psychical research. In the discussion of power relations and gender, we consider several factors, including attitudes towards psi phenomena and research practices and perspectives.

At the same moment that the Victorian mediums were challenging the materialist view inherent in rationalism, a group of scholars in London formed the Society for Psychical Research (SPR). The SPR was an exclusive intellectual salon that was established in 1882. Drawing impetus from mounting breakthroughs in the contemporary scientific arena, the SPR founders sought to identify the underlying mechanisms of Spiritualism and Mesmerism. They attempted to reconcile the societal tensions that existed between a reality dominated by materialism and one that embraced the spirit realm. Eventually a split occurred within the membership over the guiding philosophy of the society. One group, made up of Spiritualists, questioned the value of what they thought of as obsessive scrutiny and skepticism. They operated at the level of belief and experience, personifying the stereotypically "female" traits already discussed. The other faction, which ultimately dominated, advocated control, rigor, and objectivity—all values that are associated with a stereotypical "male" construction (Haynes, 1982).

Several women were involved in the formation of the SPR. Mary Boole, the widow of a prominent mathematician, served on the first council of the society. Little has been said about her, for she resigned six months later, stating that it was because she was the "only lady on the council" (Haynes, 1982, p. 5). According to the minutes of the SPR council, her resignation was accepted with regret. Renée Haynes (1982), in her history of the SPR, offers the following speculation on the rationale underlying Boole's decision:

> What could "the circumstances" have been? Were they simply the result of some embarrassing female modesty? Did she feel overruled by all those deep male voices, without a chance to speak? Was there some irreconcilable disagreement between personalities or principles? Did she think, as Mrs. Henry Sidgwick later seems to have thought for awhile, that

> the pursuit of psychical research might damage the cause of feminism (both unpopular subjects tinged with a certain sense of impropriety)? We shall never know; but the fact that she could put forward being "the only lady on Council" as a reason for resigning, and that Council should have accepted it instead of co-opting another woman to serve with her, casts a gaslit gleam on the general atmosphere of the period. (pp. 5-6)

Indeed, Haynes here reveals various difficulties confronting women in the early days of psychical research.

Eleanor Sidgwick was the best known of the early British psychical researchers. She was characterized as a cool, rational woman with little room for feelings. She had a preference for abstraction, which was revealed in her devotion to mathematics. Born into an upper class family of scholars, Eleanor married Henry Sidgwick, a prominent Cambridge University professor, in 1876. Their relationship was characterized as a "marriage of true minds." With no children and economic freedom, Eleanor Sidgwick maintained an independent lifestyle as scholar, teacher, and psychical researcher.

Her interests in psychical research were dictated by a conservative commitment to logic and reason. She noted the need for humor in dealing with mediums, whose disposition differed significantly from her own. Her power was derived from a modeling of the stereotypical "male" attitude inherent in the scientific paradigm. She juxtaposed herself to the mediums who attempted to subvert female sexuality in the context of the seance setting. In this way, she maintained her position of authority while asserting control over herself and the objects of investigation.

That she did so, however, is not to say that Sidgwick failed to understand the value of spontaneity and passive observation. Indeed, she spent an immense amount of time collecting, organizing, and then corroborating spontaneous experiences indicative of the paranormal. She published numerous articles and books, including her continuation of the classic, *Phantasms of the living* by Gurney, Myers, and Podmore (1886), which itself became a classic (Sidgwick, 1923/1962). In her writings, she applied a critical attitude to people's reports of ghosts and psychic phenomena. The social tensions inherent in gender characterizations were personified by Sidgwick as she attempted to balance rationalism and experiential knowledge.

Along the same lines, we may examine another pillar in the history of psychical research, Dr. Louisa Rhine, the most prominent American

woman parapsychologist. Born in 1891, Louisa came from a poor rural family. She worked her way through college, culminating her studies with a Ph.D. in botany in 1923 from the University of Chicago (Berger, 1988). She had married J.B. Rhine three years earlier, when he too was a graduate student at the University of Chicago. This was the beginning of a joint life filled with commitment to research, scholarly study, and the establishment of contemporary parapsychology.

In many ways, L.E. Rhine epitomizes the contradictions inherent in being a woman and a parapsychologist. As anyone who knew her will attest, she was intelligent and highly independent in her thinking. At the same time, she was the product of a generation that subordinated women's needs to those of their husbands. For example, in an interview with Dr. Rhine before her death, she was asked what drew her away from her original plans for botany. Her response was quick and to the point: "I'd say it was my husband. He did it. I don't know where I'd be if it hadn't been for him. His interests were quite intense from the time he entered college" (L.E. Rhine, personal communication, 1980). Likewise, she noted that she wasn't always as involved in research as her husband: "Like many women, I took time out to raise four children."

Like Sidgwick before her, Rhine lived out an interesting tension between the rationalist approach, committed to objectivity, empiricism, and a philosophy that challenged the dominant view of materialism (Hess, 1992). She was a productive and capable researcher and writer. She published several experimental papers, including senior authorship on the first psychokinesis study with dice reported by the Rhines. Like Sidgwick, however, Rhine is best known for her spontaneous case collections (L.E. Rhine, 1961, 1981).

The commitment to spontaneous occurrences of psi reveals the dialectical position of Rhine within the larger social framework. Within the dominant and stereotypically "male" research paradigm, there has been a clear subordination of spontaneous case studies in relation to experimental work. This was revealed by J.B. Rhine (1949, p. 64) when he wrote:

> The value of these spontaneous cases obviously lay in the start and direction they gave to experimental investigation, and the importance of these functions can hardly be exaggerated. The cases did not, however, in themselves constitute adequate evidence of any form of extrasensory perception. . . .

> Unfortunately the importance of this restriction of the role of spontaneous cases has not been generally recognized, and therefore this material has often been miscast as evidence of the abilities involved.

Here we see the implicit superiority of the reductionistic and objectivist "male" paradigm that has dominated parapsychology since its beginnings. For Louisa Rhine, the collection of spontaneous cases allowed her to contribute a "female" perspective to the scientific enterprise without offering a direct challenge to the underlying assumptions of the new discipline.

This same theme emerges in the context of contemporary psi research. At the risk of being presumptuous, I will use this paper as an opportunity for self-critique within the context of gender and power relations. After all, I, too, am a woman in parapsychology. My sense of self is embedded within a context that shapes, and is shaped by, psi research. Although I have not confronted power relations in any overt way, my work has been guided by them implicitly. In an effort to overcome some of the prejudices against parapsychology, I, like my predecessors, have worked within the "male"-dominated objectivist tradition. I have been recognized by the scientific establishment as one who has successfully controlled the appropriate conditions, manipulated proper variables, used correct statistical methods, and achieved statistical significance (Druckman & Swets, 1988). Having done so, I am convinced that this perspective reveals only a small part of the psi story. What is lacking is the stereotypical "female" side that gives primacy to spontaneity, subjective experience, emotions, feelings, and other intangible components.

In conjunction with my experimental studies, I have explored various strategies for a qualitative approach in psi research. Until now, however, I was unaware of the inherent gender perspectives at play. Through this writing, my work emerges in a political light that illuminates on-going power relations. "Using" myself as an experimental subject (e.g., Schlitz & Haight, 1984) has allowed me to circumvent the subject/object dichotomy so pervasive in a science dominated by stereotypical "male" traits. Although this approach has been criticized by advocates of conventional designs (e.g., Stokes, 1990), I would argue that it is the only way to gain a firsthand perspective on the phenomena we study. In conjunction with rational discussions of methodology in formal publications, I have tried to include my personal experiences. This

provides an integration of gender styles, although objectivity and reductionism are still privileged by my commitment to experimentation.

Following this movement of ideas, I have begun to study the beliefs and practices of successful psi experimenters (Schlitz, 1987). The goal of this approach is to allow the values of objectivity (successful experiments) to serve as a screening mechanism to determine my informants. From there, the work embraces the logic of spontaneous case studies, seeking patterns in the qualitative data. By probing the beliefs and feelings of my colleagues (thus far all male), I have an opportunity to map another dimension of the psi experience. In this process, however, it is clear that the qualitative dimension remains subordinate to objective research paradigms. Like the women before me, I have played with the gender boundaries inherent in the practice of parapsychology without offering a direct challenge to the stereotypical "male" dominated research paradigm.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined women and parapsychology from the perspective of power relations. I have argued that gender roles are a product of everyday experiences related to the paranormal. Individual life histories do not emerge, but are formed through interactions, social and political (Connell, 1987). Power relations are part of the dance through which personhood is formed and displayed. Dominance and submission, authority and resistance, are exchanged by partners as they take new steps, adopt new roles, forge new identities.

The construction of gender in the context of psi research is part of a broader political process that reveals fundamental social tensions. These tensions involve a complex interplay of rationalism, objectivity, and logic on the one hand, and spirit, essence, intuition, and spontaneity on the other. The paradoxes and contradictions that emerge in the construction of femininity reflect this dialectic. Women, whether believers, practitioners, or psychical researchers, are part of an on-going process in which morality, personal relations, and research directions reflect and resist the socially constructed gender categories.

Although the relationship of power, psi, and gender relations has been developed in this essay, the political efficacy of the process remains

primarily tacit. A symbolic analysis is useful, but it does not confront the perpetual dominance of abstract, technological knowledge over experience and feelings. What is needed to bring the gender issue to the forefront is the formation of what Sandra Harding (1989) refers to as a robust gender-sensitive reflexivity practice. In this way, we may deconstruct many of the assumptions that we have about everyday experience. The motivations and implications of our concern with the paranormal should be taken on the same plane of significance as the phenomena of our study. Our interests in psi phenomena, therefore, become fundamentally political. This does not denounce the value of rationalism and its various assumptions about the nature of reality. It does, however, urge us to seek a respectful interplay between the subjective and the objective, the emotional and the rational, the intuitive and the logical.

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DISCUSSION

ZINGRONE: In the interest of being a little more specific (we have been very abstract for a day now), we need to find out what Harding really means by a robust, gender-sensitive, reflexivity practice. Is she only talking in terms of our spending some time thinking about why we

do what we do, how we model reality, and how we project those models of reality onto our experimental practice? Or, does she have some specific recommendation about how one would actually do this?

SCHLITZ: I don't want to speculate on Harding, but I think we can take off on that notion and build from it within our own discussions here. She doesn't deal with parapsychology, obviously.

ZINGRONE: She does with scientific method.

SCHLITZ: What she is trying to call for is greater reflexivity regarding our experience in the process of doing research, in the process of formulating concepts of science. She would argue, I believe, that the very experience of doing research becomes the object of inquiry. Beverly mentioned this and a couple of the other speakers yesterday, about the divorce between the investigator and the subject of inquiry. What Harding and a number of the feminist critics consider is the relationship between those two. So, in other words, we can't pull ourselves back. We don't manipulate our subjects. We are our subjects in the very process of formulating the research questions. I think that even the research questions are a part of this process. We need to deconstruct why we have addressed the questions in the way we did. And getting back yesterday to this question about a feminist perspective and the challenge that objective science offers to that approach, I think it is a question we need to deal with. In other words, there is a very important reason why the male paradigm is dominant; it has predictability and it has a lot of utility in our society. You turn on the light switch, it works. How can we begin to try and formulate a way in which this feminist perspective has the same utility, or stands on the same plane of significance, as the objective paradigm? I don't think that in formulating this feminist perspective we are trying to overcome the objective paradigm or trying to say that it's not relevant but to integrate this more reflexive perspective within that process. Do you agree with that?

ZINGRONE: Yes.

SCHLITZ: Does that make sense? I feel that is an important topic for us to continue with because it is a principle challenge. We can say, "Oh, yes, it's a male-dominated thing. Oh, yes, they subordinate women." But that doesn't go very far. I mean, that's interesting, but it doesn't help us to try and change or fundamentally alter the problems inherent within that stereotypically male-dominated system. I do not mean man versus woman. I mean what these stereotypes are characterizations of. But I

think we need to wrestle with questions about how we can come to terms with the power issues. In Beverly's paper she argued that we want to dominate nature. In the Western world there has been this idea that if we can control that which is unknowable or uncontrollable that gives us a sense of security and stability, and I think that things like earthquakes and hurricanes reveal our vulnerability and our lack of control over things in nature. That is a very threatening concept and this relativist kind of feminist perspective is very threatening to the idea that we can control. I don't think that it is just men wanting to be in control, it's all of us. We want to have some organization, some means of understanding how reality is constructed. And the fact that this more objective paradigm has been so useful, so fruitful, gives it a tremendous amount of power. We can make predictions. We can understand order, and I think we need to deal with how the feminist view fits in with that.

BLACKMORE: You started off by saying how much it had affected you to tackle this topic. When you go home tomorrow, or whenever it is, will you actually be working in a different way? How will it have affected the kind of research you want to do or the way you will approach your work to have thought about all these issues?

SCHLITZ: Well, I think that an integration is clearly important. I think in a way I have been moving in that direction anyway. In particular, work with the experimenter phenomenology is a nice integration because what it says is that I have a group of informants, William Braud and Helmut Schmidt, for example, who have a very strong track record of success in a laboratory setting. We feel a little more secure that their experiences have more primacy than someone who has not participated in formal testing.

BLACKMORE: It is getting dangerous.

SCHLITZ: In Texas, we don't have any way of substantiating the claims that a person in England, for example, makes about their experiences or their beliefs. But using this strategy of picking informants based on their success record within the objective paradigm and then adopting a more descriptive, reflexive methodology is an interesting sort of balance between those perspectives. I have bought the male paradigm. I mean, I really do feel like there is a tremendous amount of utility in it and I'm basically an experimentalist at heart. I sympathize with people's frustration that some of the feminists perspectives are a little vague; I like to be concrete. I want to sink my teeth into something and say, "Yes,

I can really be productive with this." And I think the real essence of it is to marry the views, to know that it is this yin and yang, or to know that to understand one, we have to have the other. I think what a lot of feminists are trying to do is to overcome the discrimination. We just want equal rights here. We want an equal place, and I think that is an important thing to recognize—it's not that one is dominant over the other. It is an interplay; it is a marriage; it's a dance.

BLACKMORE: You said something in there about productivity or being productive. And I wondered how much in all of what you are saying the productivity is measurable only in a "male stereotypical" way. In other words, if you have this balanced attitude, whether what you are talking about is productivity, it is what's going to come out of the male side of it. It's all very well to have the balance, but you have not changed what you count as measuring productivity. Or, have I misunderstood you, and actually you are making a shift in what you would consider as productive research?

SCHLITZ: Yes, I think there is a shift because of this effort to map the consciousness, or experiences, of people who have been successful in psi experiments.

BLACKMORE: But what would you count as productive when you have done it?

SCHLITZ: Yes, I'm afraid I get caught up in the same problem that Louisa Rhine did, which is that I see a lot of this stuff as useful for leading to the generation of more experiments. I do see that as a problem, and I see that one of the things coming out of this conference is a way to try and figure out where experiences can be on their own terms.

BLACKMORE: Maybe it isn't a problem. Maybe it's fine. Maybe all it can do is contribute a way of actually allowing the world out there and people's experiences to feed to each other. That would be fine, if that's what you're saying. An alternative is that you want to do something completely different and get away from experiments all together. I don't think that.

SCHLITZ: Well, I think that there is a lot of value in understanding social reality in these qualitative approaches. I went into anthropology simply because I was frustrated with reductionism. I have been doing experimental work all this time, and I feel like it's a nice story; but it's a tiny little bit of what people's experiences are all about. Anthropology provides a rigorous methodology for attempting to come to terms with

some of these vaguer qualitative issues having to do with values, morality, and belief systems. Anthropologists have been doing that for 100 years—really trying to systematically look at those questions. And I think where my work may go, in addition to some more experimental work, is to try and get a grounding of these beliefs within a broader social and political framework, which is something that I had not really thought to do before. I had not thought about it as intrinsically political. In fact, one of my frustrations in doing parapsychology has been that it is apolitical. So what? What does this have to do with starving children in Bangladesh? I mean, it doesn't. It is a very bourgeois activity, and sometimes that frustrates my politics. Now I see it in a different light. Maybe this is a rationalization, but this meeting has helped me in seeing it as something that has much more political significance because it is challenging some of these real hard-core social issues having to do with the balance between "hard" and "soft" approaches.

RUBIK: I would like to go back to that question you raised about the successfulness of the so-called masculine approach and what can we offer with the feminine approach. I think that the so-called masculine approach has been successful because we have a lot of technology and a lot of control over our environment. However, we are beginning to see immense limitations to that approach in the form of over-control, over-manipulation, and thinking we can do better than nature that has led to ecological devastation, to food that has become tasteless because of soils that are simply dead substrates. We have high-tech medicine with which people are getting more and more frustrated, and it is not curing our chronic degenerative ills. And, in fact, down the road in parapsychology we may be leading ourselves to some psi technologies where people have their lives controlled. We don't know what people have cooking on the back burner of the military industrial complex.

I think the feminine perspective offers a way out of this devastation of nature, *The death of nature*, as the title of Carolyn Merchant's book calls it. The feminine perspective brings us out of fear and back to trust and oneness with nature. This is so important for humanity at this time. I think it can heal our ills globally and individually and bring back a personal perspective in our medicine—the complementary forms of medicine, to deal with the whole, unique person. It can bring us back to working with nature because, of course, women have always had to deal with their own natural cycles, but beyond that, to working within cycles

of nature to heal Gaia. I think the attention to the inner process of doing science will assure that humanism is not divorced from technology and future developments. I think that is the most important thing that we have to offer. I think the world desperately needs this now.

SCHLITZ: I guess the only place I would challenge you is that I wonder how effective it is being. I think there is the recognition and awareness that there are environmental problems or that there is this sense of powerlessness or vulnerability in the face of our attempting to manipulate nature, for example. But that is secondary to the fact that we have this power over nature, and people are really absorbed in the infinite possibilities of the new genetics, for example. The challenge would be to really try and balance that power over and power with nature.

RUBIK: I realize that. Well, we need to approach this in a new way. We can't just sit back and be receptive, passive females watching it all happen. We have to be a little more yang in our feminine approach. In other words, we have to go out and do something and not just write abstract treatises about it. It is going to take a different type of femininity than has traditionally been thought of. We really have to move forward, and quickly.

SCHLITZ: We have to be careful though, that we don't just model on the males. That's the danger, I guess.

HEINZE: I wonder if we are not perpetuating the dilemma in talking about the male paradigm and feminine approaches. I had to face it when I entered the University of California at Berkeley. I think if we look at objective results people claim to have obtained objectively, you have to make people aware how limited these results are. They are limited; they are such a small portion of the topic that has actually been studied that they are almost insignificant. But it is still maintained that there have been objective results, and they are completely blown out of proportion. I would not work with these male and feminine paradigms, but I just would make people aware of the huge areas that have not been studied and that should at least be considered when presenting these results. I wanted to do it in my regular paper, but I will do it right now. You see, the dilemma started when science and religion split because in earlier times science and religion were one discipline. And then we had the split between state and religion; and they barely respected each other. They are now separated. I went to Asia specifically for this purpose because

the split is not that strong in Asia. In Thailand, for example, by constitution the king has to be a Buddhist, because 90% of his country is Buddhist, though they have freedom of religion. Thai religion never stepped back as much as it did in our countries. I think the best approach to solving this dilemma is to prove to objective science how limited their results are. We have learned scientific methods. I think they are absolutely valuable and very good, though I have slight doubts about statistical measurements—they can be manipulated, and my educated guesses were always better than my statistics. Showing the limitations of hard science research is, I think, the best way to go because we are walking on completely neutral grounds. We want more knowledge, male as well as female. We have finally come into our rights. We will be a critical mass, I'm sure. So, I am a woman, and I consider myself a female scientist, but I think playing on this dichotomy, and these male and female paradigms, we only worsen the situation. To improve sciences, the advancement of the sciences, we have to show the limitation of what we have done so far and point out the areas that are open for research. We can find the truth using many different techniques, as was suggested yesterday. We may have to use four or five techniques for one problem and then find the truth or the closest approximation of reality.

SCHLITZ: Well, the only thing about the female-male paradigm business is that it is a useful metaphor, in a way. I mean, I don't think one is male, one is female. Again, stereotypically, in terms of the way it can be characterized, I think it is a useful interplay for a dialectic. I don't think there is anything inherently male or female, or biologically based, about the two paradigms or two approaches; and like you say, there is a duplicity of approaches.