

Comment to the Special Issue

“Women and Parapsychology: Observation – Reflections.”

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An Inspiring International Experience as a Guest Editor

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A special acknowledgment for the enriching period of time working with Gerhard and Nan on special issue, Vol. 22, Issue 2, *Women and Parapsychology: Observations – Reflections* has been on my mind since December, 2022 when its production concluded. I didn't want it to be over. So, it is with heartfelt appreciation I mindfully address the inspiring international experience this project gave to me.

The organization of the chief editor, Gerhard Mayer, my co-editing tasks with Nancy L. Zingrone and our editorial meetings; involvement with the authors; the entire process; and, others with whom I freely conveyed interest in and respect for the language of parapsychology from the perspective of the project, gave a good impression of dedication. For contributions to academic, cultural, religious, historic and community areas of science, the project's variety of intellectual essence made a remarkable impact on me personally, and it compelled the work's intention: It was nothing more than to reawaken a controversial subject for continued pondering.

The observations I made at the Paris PA Convention in July, 2019, were absolutely central to the project being realized, hence, these are the things I noticed having their own gravitational pull. The rational contentions volleyed by Gerhard Mayer and myself, our emotional opinions plus the territories of our longevity in the personal areas of our combined learned concentration, (exchanged with one another on the train from the conference), became another lens with which one could see parapsychology. I thank him for listening. I thank him for technically realizing a thought-provoking topic into print. Between Gerhard, Nan, and Eberhard Bauer,² whom

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2 Eberhard Bauer also was very receptive to and encouraged by my interest in Toni Wolff's work as a female psychoanalyst with whom Jung discussed his research. Eberhard told me about such roles of similar women of her time.

I met when I was a guest at the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health (IGPP) – he attended also the Paris PA Convention – I was pushed out of the proverbial nest to come outside my comfort zone (as an undergraduate philosophy student I argued, fastidiously, I might add, that I was not a feminist philosopher!) and stand for something more than the sum of my experiences, skin color, or gender. I have these three steadfast academic partakers of my journey to deeply thank. The meaningfulness of this cross-cultural hospitality, its merging of support and teamwork proved its value deeply driven by inquiry concerning any glitches in the work of doing science when it comes to women and parapsychology.

What had I done? I put a little spark into collaborative scholarship to explore new frontiers of psychology, to borrow a theme of the IGPP. Working with Nan in an electrifying field like parapsychology made the synergy of the three of us something I began to crave. Looking forward to meetings, to focusing on this untapped topic in the post-pandemic, “me too” era with other conversations also bringing women’s presence to the fore, expanded my perspectives on importantly audacious facets of *women and parapsychology*. My insistence that chief editor of the *Journal of Anomalistics*, Gerhard Mayer, account for more women’s visibility in the journal, actually became a special issue. I saw him in a position to do something positive for future parapsychologists.

Upon returning from Paris, I immediately searched for women in parapsychology beyond the nucleus of those already well-known. I decided the problem of epistemology, of women’s ways of knowing and being heard and seen had something to add to women and parapsychology. Then I read an article by Nan about women authoring research.

The authors of the special issue generated a field of vision with dynamism and interconnection. As their contributions both expanded and pinpointed areas of women and parapsychology, I felt their work refining my personal as well as global tolerance for a topic that is vulnerable to popularized, oftentimes misunderstood and mostly extreme points of view and their counterpoints. Sonali’s culturally specific discussion of Psi; Fatima’s beautiful organizing and synchronistic experiences among sensitive men in her family; Jacob’s confidence in his language; Christine’s meticulous details to importantly discounted process within parapsychology; a scrupulousness look at an evolution of involvement in parapsychology from Jessica; Renaud’s investigative scholarship; Caroline’s courageous, no-nonsense disrobing of privilege; an overdue talk about children’s place in research by Donna; and a spellbinding journey by Ina, of an iconic woman whose life as a scientist was profoundly changed by witnessing paranormal phenomena – not to mention the wonderful awareness-raising of Eberhard’s piece, shaved layers of hardening off my mind. It was a kind of peace-building I felt. My admiration is huge for the time and care each contributor gave their articles.

The project’s production occurred in the year following the loss of my mother. She passed away in the first weeks of the project’s work. This coalescence of defining moments in my life, I recognized in the authors’ submissions. What does one do with life-forming pressures? Change. Be willing to be shaped by the inevitable. I engaged the special issue with all my heart, pollinating discussions with Nan and Gerhard to redefine the woman-man discus-

sion of parapsychology and bridging antiquated notions with new, almost foreign energy for exploring the unknown. To be with inspired boundaries of science reassured the edges of my own change. To the authors of *Women and Parapsychology: Observations – Reflections*, being guest co-editor and transforming the future together with your trust in the project, has been exceptionally fun.

For my mom.